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MEMOIRS

OF

HIS OWN LIFE,

BY

TATE WILKINSON,

PATENTEE OF THE THEATRES-ROYAL, YORK & HULL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

——IF I HAD HELD MY PEN BUT HALF AS WELL AS I HAVE HELD MY BOTTLE——WHAT A CHARMING HAND I SHOULD HAVE WROTE BY THIS TIME!

VOL. I.

YORK:

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TO HIS GRACE THE

DUKE OF NORFOLK.

MY LORD DUKE,

TO a patron of the Muſes this would indeed be an intruſive and contemptible offering, as I cannot claim even the moſt diſtant relationſhip with the Siſter Arts; and if I were to aſſume only a familiar and eaſy acquaintance, I ſhould be inſtantly detected as a ſilly, though *not* an *artful* impoſtor: I muſt therefore ſlide imperceptibly into your Grace's preſence, under the fallacious and ſpecious pretext of being a dangling twig-couſin of the alluring theatres, to which your Grace is a well-known avowed friend, *amateur*, and protector; as they evidently are honoured with your Grace's never-failing tribute and ſupport:—Therefore, under the guardian ſhades of Melpomene and Thalia, I am emboldened *(by Hope)* to caſt my defenceleſs work at your Grace's feet, imploring mercy and pity for my lack of ſkill and non-acquaintance with the Muſes. The work, indeed, is a true picture of its maſter, being as deſtitute of wit as wealth:—The concurring evils of

its poverty, and want of natural brilliant endowments, preclude, I fear, every poſſible chance of good fortune for preſerving its life with the world's approbation, unleſs when they behold with wonder your Grace's condeſcenſion in raiſing the ſupplicating mendicant from the ground, and crowning its inſignificance with your good wiſhes, which muſt be ever regarded as an honoured and gracious foſtering. And who knows, by being thus adorned with the Duke of Norfolk's name in its front, but it may make ſo brilliant an appearance as to obtain a paſſport into the preſence of the moſt noble and worthy, and by ſuch unmerited good fortune, its ſickly life may not only be preſerved from inſtant periſhing, but prolonged even after its inſignificant parent ſhall inevitably be obliterated from the ſmalleſt traces of memory; as your Grace's goodneſs, wit, and underſtanding, will live for ages, and perhaps occaſionally be the means of reſtoring a faint glimmering (in theatrical dark paſſages) of him who, during his life, has ever been with true gratitude and reſpectful homage,

Your Grace's much honoured,
highly obliged, and obedient
humble ſervant,

YORK,
OCTOBER 23. 1790. } TATE WILKINSON.

PREFACE.

GOOD READER,

BE kind, courteous, merciful, and forgiving; for how would you be, if *HE*, who is the top of judgment, ſhould but judge you as you are? Oh! think on that, and mercy then will breathe within your lips like man new made.

This confuſed, motley, incoherent medley—this ſomething, or this nothing of a work, was undertaken without any premeditation or note whatever, and finiſhed heedleſsly, during a ſevere, painful, and tedious illneſs, occaſioned by a dreadful fractured leg—the time greatly interfered upon with the conſtant and unavoidable vexations, diſappointments, and accidents, that will ever be the natural attendants on the conductor of a theatre; as the difficulty of pleaſing before and behind the curtain *requires, at leaſt*, no *common ſhare* of *wit:* but as I was unable to move, and was ever addicted to the witching time of night, it helped to alleviate many diſtreſſed hours.

As to wit I profeſs it not, yet here and there it will ſtart unexpectedly, as the quotations are ſo variouſly ſprinkled, and either witneſs for or againſt me; but

I may surely be permitted to quote, as the ablest and most ingenious men do the same (no matter how elevated in rank and station) and are frequently heard by the Lords and Commons, and even at the learned bar on the most serious occasions; neither is the holy pulpit entirely exempt from this practice. The esteemed Samuel Whyte, Esq; of Dublin, remarks, that "every class of life has its pedants; those of a theatrical turn shew their predilection in their use of theatrical allusions and citations from plays on every occasion, happily exemplified in the character of the Apprentice; here the writer takes leave, once for all, to acknowledge, that he has studiously imitated the turn of expression, and adopted a favourite phrase from any passage alluded to in other writers, without particularizing it by any mark or intimation, deeming it superfluous to the learned reader, who needs no monitor to recognise an old acquaintance, and may be pleased to meet it in a novel and unexpected situation: To the less learned it would be empty parade, and disfigure the page to no end. Our most eminent poets have freely indulged themselves in this practice;—Pope especially;—but as he resorted to the ancients, and works not commonly known, it has not been generally noticed; and by most who have observed it, esteemed a beauty." As a stage chronologer, I

flatter myſelf this work (beſides its authenticity) poſſeſſes ſtage materials, and many whimſical ſituations, that, in the hands of a Mr. Murphy, might have been ſo pleaſingly dreſſed, as to have ſuſtained the being viewed and examined:—But I fear, like Bayes, I have a knack of making myſelf not underſtood.—I mean it as a kind of regiſter for all perſons attached to the theatres, and who wiſh for information relative to the London and Dublin ſtages: It may relieve an heavy hour on a rainy day; and to theatrical profeſſors I think I may recommend it, as containing as impartial and true an account of the progreſs of the principal events of playhouſes as any book I can recollect on the ſubject; and at the ſame time truly lament its thouſand deficiencies, and improprieties, which, I am ſenſible, will be inſuperable bars to its proſperity.

However, I wrap myſelf in one idea, which is, I think it will not, cannot be, on examination, more indifferently and contemptuouſly eſtimated, than all my friends, and even my foes combined, (I dare ſuppoſe) expect it to be; and I as freely declare, on the peruſal, it is better, with all its prolixity, than I ever expected it would or could be. But I muſt in its behalf requeſt my readers to obſerve, as a ſtrict truth, that the printers, to their inceſſant fatigue, can teſtify, there never has been *one regular* ſheet, *or*

a legible one; and, though a ſtrange aſſertion, it is *incontrovertibly true:* the incorrectneſs of what I had *ſcratched* down *from one corner to the other*, was not intelligible even to myſelf the day following, and therefore it was next to impoſſible to properly divine the meaning; conſequently many paſſages and words have been miſconſtrued, and unavoidably retained and printed; and hence ſeveral of my *wiſe* obſervations and informations, from *abſolute neceſſity*, have been entirely obliterated, or not properly inſerted; frequently from my own ſplaſhings and alterations, as I ſo bewildered the printers, that they declared it incomprehenſible and impoſſible to proceed;—that they never had ſuch a job in their lives, and heartily prayed they never might have ſuch another.—However, the preſs, after groaning, has produced to light the miſhapen deformity. Indeed it may with propriety be obſerved as matter of ſurpriſe, all circumſtances conſidered, that my truly good friend, (in the fulleſt ſenſe of the word) Mr. WILSON, has accompliſhed a work in ten months, in ſpight of the ſeveral inſurmountable obſtacles, and ſtriking impediments, which obſtructed its ever gliding ſmoothly into the road of either credit or fame. All this conſidered will eaſily gain kind allowance why its delay need not be wondered at, and my lameneſs apologize for tardy ſteps; for

when I *first* printed the propofals, I had at that time only begun the toilfome talk I had fet myfelf; and though *brevity* is the firft word, I fear *tautology* would with juftice feize the elderfhip and right*. But, notwithftanding its ricketty origin, be it known to all men, that there is a fecret pride, which, however I would endeavour to conceal, will burft out when I perceive *four volumes* in print—*By* TATE WILKINSON. I reflect on it with aftonifhment, and look with wonder at my patience and perfeverance, as *philofophy* and *fteadinefs*, I dare affert, rarely attend my hobbling morning or evening walks. Every one will readily admit the materials to be the genuine fpinning from my own brain; and allow me, like Touchftone, to be contented with my own ill-favoured thing, which no one elfe will claim. I muft obferve, it has been a tedious collection from me-

* The Tablet being an after-thought, rendered fome repetition requifite, and feveral anecdotes are omitted there, as a reference to the firft and fecond volumes will fupply many deficiencies.—The reader will allow for the different dates I have mentioned when writing, and not allude to the year of perufal. For an account of Mrs. Baker, who letters conclude Vol. IV. (See Vol. III. page 64.)——Mentioning London performers in a future publication, intitled "The Wandering Patentee," is to be underftood as meant not to extend beyond thofe who have favoured the York Theatre with their fervices, not to the performers at large, as that would be taking too great a liberty.

mory, not having a ſingle note except the interſperſed genuine letters and ancient play-bills, which have been preſerved merely by accident (not deſign) from the ruins of time, and ſnatched from the blaze of hundreds *. If my ability equalled my inclination, it would be as elegant and heart-felt an offering as real genius ever preſented to a diſcerning public. Such as it is I ſubmiſſively requeſt their acceptance of it; and, like good-willed Francis's pennyworth of ſugar, can only lament it is not better.—Now earneſtly wiſhing for more friends, without the need, and their every proſperity,

I am their highly indebted, much obliged,

and reſpectful humble ſervant, &c.

YORK,
OCTOBER 23, 1790. } TATE WILKINSON.

N. B. To Mr. SWALWELL I look on myſelf as much indebted, for the buſineſs could never have proceeded, but from his inceſſant exertions and indefatigable perſeverance.

* Except two printed play-bills, one of 1748, the other 1750, as inſerted in the Memoirs, I am not poſſeſſed of one prior to 1753; all the others are actually from memory.

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MEMOIRS

OF

TATE WILKINSON.

BREVITY is the ſoul of WIT.——I am ſorry for my own ſake, as well as for thoſe who have the patience and good nature to peruſe this motley work, to obſerve, that it will be dreadfully deficient in both theſe material articles.—However, that the reader may not be kept in ſuſpenſe, and then complain that the *mountain*, after a *tedious labour*, has at length *brought forth only a mouſe*, I will, without further ceremony, proceed.

I, *Tate Wilkinſon*, whoſe various ſtage adventures and *ſparrings* have been permitted, and favoured with acceptance, more or leſs, in almoſt every principal theatre in the three kingdoms, as Drury-Lane, Covent-Garden, Hay-Market,—Smock-Alley and Crow-Street, Dublin,—Bath, Edinburgh, Portſmouth, Wincheſter, Maidſtone,

Birmingham, Chester, Briſtol, Norwich, York, Shrewſbury, Richmond in Surry, Exeter, Glaſgow, Newcaſtle, Leeds, Lynn, Pontefract, Halifax, Doncaſter, Hull, Wakefield, &c.—am the ſon of the late Rev. Dr. John Wilkinſon, who was educated at St. Bees in Cumberland, and finiſhed his ſtudies at the univerſity of Oxford, and who ſuffered tranſportation under the well remembered Marriage Act in 1755. He was his Majeſty's chaplain of the Savoy, alſo chaplain to his late Royal Highneſs Frederic Prince of Wales, rector of Coyty in the county of Glamorgan, and ſtipendary-curate of Wiſe in the county of Kent.—The late Lord Galway, with whom he was particularly acquainted, preſented him with a gift, which yielded a right to open plaiſter-pits in the honour of Pontefract: The original grant was to Robert Monkton, late of Hoderoyde, in the county of York, father to the aforeſaid Lord Galway: The right from the Duchy-office was in 1740.—Thoſe plaiſter-pits were ſold to a Mr. Jenkinſon, near Ferrybridge; but how they turned out it never lay in my way to get information.——Grace Wilkinſon, his wife, was daughter of William Tate, Eſq; who was for many years one of the aldermen of the city of Carliſle, and often choſen mayor of that ancient corporation; for above forty years patent ſearcher of his Majeſty's cuſtoms there and at the port of

Whitehaven—a gentleman of undoubted loyalty. The ſaid Grace Wilkinſon, when ſhe intermarried with the Rev. John Wilkinſon, brought him two thouſand pounds, at that time judged a very genteel fortune.——Dr. Wilkinſon's affairs having been for many years greatly embarraſſed, not only hers, but all his own acquiſitions were entirely exhauſted to ſatisfy the demands of his own creditors, and thoſe of others, for whom he had become indiſcreetly engaged.

I, Tate Wilkinſon, (ſon to the ſaid John and Grace) was born October 27, 1739; and, by my father's ſentence of tranſportation, was likely to have been irretrievably ruined. I was at that critical period at the age of ſeventeen—not brought up to any buſineſs or profeſſion—of a very indifferent conſtitution—and neither mother nor ſon had the leaſt independency.

Previous to this unfortunate event, my father and mother had been connected with the moſt leading families, and were univerſally acquainted in London; the conſequence (moſt fortunately for myſelf, as will appear hereafter,) was, that from the intercourſe of viſiting they formed intimate connexions with ſeveral leading perſons of the kingdom of Ireland, which was the foundation of the happieſt future conſequences to me, as will, in the narrative, be verified.——Several of theſe fa-

milies every year reſorted to London, where they ever found hoſpitality, and a cheerful welcome, at our manſion in the Savoy.—Amongſt our various viſitors were Lord and Lady Forbes, from the ſiſter kingdom. They were ſo attached to my father and mother, as to be almoſt inſeparable: That intimacy ſubſiſted on ſo ſtrong a baſis, and formed ſo firm a friendſhip, that they uſed to call me their *own boy Tate*, and their *dear George's only particular friend.* They promiſed to fix me genteelly in life; and were certain, if George lived to be Earl of Granard, *Tate* would be well provided for.—Airy caſtles too often gain belief and dependence, when of a ſudden they diſappear, and wake the deluded dreamer from his tranſitory viſion, and in lieu preſent a true mirror, in which he views his actual ſtate.—Not that I mean theſe promiſes in all probability would not have been performed, but the wheel of Fate is ſo uncertain, perplexing, and various, as evinces the truth of Shakſpeare,—*We all know what we are; but know not what we may be.*

This intimacy with the Forbes' family was carried on more like a modern novel than a common acquaintance. Young George Forbes was born April 2, 1740:—I was not permitted to wear breeches until the ſame day appointed for George, the 2d of April, 1745. Lady Forbes,

notwithſtanding title and great expectations in life, was not without many of her days being embittered:—Her heart and mind were ſoftened by the too often experiencing humiliating events, diſappointments, and afflictions. She was related to Lord Bleſſington and Lady Tyrawley, and was niece to Lady Granard, and bred up under her care. Her eldeſt ſon, young Lord Forbes, as he ripened into manhood, by frequent intercourſe with his lovely relation, ſoon became a willing ſlave to the irreſiſtible qualities of his captivating couſin: She gave him grace for grace, and love for love, yielded to his entreaties, and they were privately married———

> ———————The maid that loves
> Goes out to ſea upon a ſhatter'd plank,
> And puts her truſt in miracles for ſafety,

truſting, as many young couples do, when the irrevocable knot was tied, that ſubmiſſion and intreaty, with a promiſe of forgiveneſs,—*This once, and I will do ſo no more:* But age, on theſe occaſions, is either ſoon ſoftened, or, like the everlaſting flint, is hard and obdurate; and, in that inſtance, was ſo to ſuch a degree, as rendered ſupplication, tears, and remonſtrance, only incentives to increaſe inſtead of leſſening the vengeance denounced.—That ſteeled character, on that occaſion, was exemplified in the ſevereſt degree, and

executed with a Roman ſtrictneſs—For the Earl of Granard not only baniſhed his ſon, Lord Forbes, from his preſence for ever, but, on the cruel ſuppoſition that Lady Granard had connived at the match, he, in the moſt ſtern and ſudden manner, ſeparated himſelf from her Ladyſhip, and never after ſaw or ſpoke to her; all mediation of families, no matter of what rank, were vain:—In this he was fixed, and acted as reſolutely as our ſtage Count of Narbonne.

Lady Granard, to prove her diſapprobation of the match, and to regain the affections of her Lord, inſtead of conſolation and comfort to her niece, Lady Forbes, in her then calamitous ſituation, vowed never to behold her more; and in this determination ſhe was as reſolute as a Roman matron, and proved ſhe poſſeſſed as ſteeled a mind as her inexorable Lord.—In one point only the female breaſt gave way to natural feeling:—Young George ſhe ſaw, cheriſhed, and adored; and often had him, while young, at her houſe in Argyle Buildings, near Soho-ſquare:—But the grandfather never yielded to the ties of affinity;—he lived chiefly retired, at his own ſeat of Caſtle Forbes in Ireland.

Lord Forbes was generally with his regiment at Gibraltar, or with the regiment on its return to Ireland:—He had a houſe in Stephen's-Green,

Dublin, and occaſionally made a ſecret excurſion to England to viſit his wife and ſon, who chiefly reſided at her houſe in Richmond Buildings, Dean-ſtreet, Soho. The ſon was, at or before ſeven years old, put to a Mr. Black's boarding-ſchool at Chiſwick, where I was often taken as a viſitor.—When turned of eleven, her Ladyſhip and ſon received orders to repair to Dublin: On this occaſion her Ladyſhip took with her a carpet for her drawing-room, eſteemed beautiful, the work of my mother, and I dare ſay it is in the family to this day, with ſeveral elegant worked ſkreens, in tent ſtitch, executed by the ſame good ingenious hand.

About the age of thirteen he was brought back to England to finiſh his education, and then to be placed in his Majeſty's Guards. Our meeting, on his arrival in England, as may be imagined, was very joyous; he was placed under the care of a Mr. Gibſon, a rigid Scotchman, alſo under the eye of his uncle Admiral Forbes. He was ſoon ſent to Harrow-ſchool; I was eager to follow him, and in another year that wiſh was accompliſhed; of which a particular account will occur in the Theatrical Hiſtory, and it will claim a ſhort attention.

But of the young hero I am now ſpeaking, when about ſixteen he was in poſſeſſion of his Majeſty's colours, and often on guard at the

Savoy; he grew very diſſipated, while under the direction of a Mr. Durel, (when not on duty) at his academy in King's-ſtreet, Golden-ſquare; but as he could not be kept within bounds, Lady Forbes, from the accounts tranſmitted to Ireland, being greatly alarmed, and fearful he ſhould incur the diſpleaſure of his father, intreated his Lordſhip to grant her, the inſpection and guardianſhip of her ſon in London, till he grew nearer a proper time of life to be truſted to the care of himſelf; this point was ſettled, and an houſe once more taken in the old ſpot, Richmond Buildings.

At firſt all ſeemed to promiſe fair, and a Mrs. Wilſon, who had for many years been companion to Lady Forbes, (a ſiſter of Mrs. Kelly, wife of honeſt old Cornelius Kelly, now living in Dublin,) was the perſon appointed to hint any private diſpleaſure to our young Captain. The fond mother ſeemed intoxicated with the proſpect of happineſs before her delighted imagination; but of a ſudden, on the non-appearance of George for a few days, ſhe experienced the moſt alarming anxiety, which, after fruitleſs enquiries, was at laſt cleared up by a young couple from Gretna Green imploring her bleſſing. Her fortitude forſook her, and her exclamations of grief, ſurpriſe, and terror, for the conſequences with Lord Forbes, and the dread of every horrid indignation from the old

Earl, overwhelmed her with the moſt poignant diſtreſs; for ſhe well foreſaw that every ill that fatally occurred, would be attributed to her needleſs aſſumption of reſiding in London—and, inſtead of preventing, would be accuſed of encouraging her ſon in every falſe ſtep. Nor had ſhe preſence of mind, nor fortitude ſufficient at the firſt ſhock, to enquire who this daughter was; but as ſoon as Reaſon could reſume its ſeat, dreading an increaſing tale of woe, yet obliged to require information; which being truly given, mitigated her uneaſineſs, and was moſt happily relieved on being pleaſingly informed he had married a daughter of Sir Nicholas Baily, tho' her expectations of fortune, on enquiring, were but ſmall: She proved a young lady of promiſe, fit to adorn any exalted ſtation in life. Matters were ill received in Ireland; but by degrees his Lordſhip became better reconciled than could be expected.—By this amiable young lady, the family were bleſſed with the preſent Earl of Granard, now in Dublin, 1789, but ſhe ſoon after fell into a decay, and, like a lily drooping, died. It was during this part of their hiſtory the reader will ſuppoſe, when I hereafter ſpeak of Lady Forbes, (that young gentleman's mother) that I received ſuch favours when firſt acting in London.

Soon after the death of that amiable young lady, the Earl of Granard died, but not before

he was reconciled at the laſt to his ſon and grand-ſon, then become Lord Forbes, and his father of courſe the Earl of Granard. The young Lord married a lady of quality in London: Soon after his ſecond marriage he became Earl of Granard, but from modern faſhions was ſeparated from his Lady—He went to Ireland, his mother went with him; but, being then in poſſeſſion of all his wiſhes in point of rank and fortune, I am truly grieved to add, he grew diſſipated, and of courſe ſo very rapidly involved, as inevitably loſt him all conſequence and eſteem amongſt thoſe where his rank entitled him to every reſpect and increaſe of popularity and dignity. To cloſe my account of a gentleman ſo much my ſuperior, and for whom I had the ſtrongeſt attachments, and every reaſon to expect friendſhip and laſting regard, if promiſes and profeſſions may be ſuppoſed to allow a claim, added to the intercourſe of many years, I will finiſh this portrait, by mentioning when I was laſt in Dublin, in 1772, he was conſtantly with me by ten o'clock in a morning, and I often paſſed the evening with him, at his houſe in Myrion-ſtreet, near Myrion-ſquare. But, three nights before my return to England, my company, on Thurſday June 4, was particularly deſired to meet Mr. Lee, attorney at law, on urgent buſineſs. It was our laſt meeting: The mighty buſineſs was to be a witneſs

to his will, which he, Mr. Lee (now living in Dublin) drew up—No not even a ring to his memory—nor at my benefit, which was on the 28th of May, did he ſo much as take a box or even a box ticket—but was there in perſon.—So much for friendſhip!—ſo much for dependence!—But I muſt not omit, that whenever I paid my reſpects in Myrion-ſtreet, there was plenty—nay, even a profuſion of half pints of Claret, Burgundy, &c. Had he regarded himſelf more, I might perhaps, have profited by our ſtrong intimacy, imbibed from childhood.

Let this be a leſſon to place as much as poſſible our chief dependence on ourſelves, rather than rely on ideal hopes or promiſes from ſuperiors.—How did I retire home to my lodging that evening, is a natural queſtion?—Why, good reader, whoever thou art, I aſſure you not unhappily—I reflected, that had the Earl felt for his own welfare, he would in all probability have retained ſome portion of feeling and humanity for his old—his intimate friend;—and, when reclined on my pillow, found myſelf at that moment poſſeſſed of every ſupply for my wants, with health and ſpirits to ſupport thoſe wants; I felt myſelf comparatively the greateſt man of the two. He did not live many years after the Spring 1772. The young Lady Granard, (of whom I have not

the leaſt knowledge) I believe, is married in Ireland—The Lady Dowager Granard, was ever my ſtaunch friend; ſhe retired to England, and died, within theſe few years, at her villa ſome miles from London.

The preſent Lord Granard, I am told, bears his bluſhing honours thick upon him; pray God he may have no froſt to nip them, but reſtore his family laurels to their priſtine health and vigour, and with many years enjoy that felicity long wanting to his predeceſſors.—He is ſpoke of in the warmeſt terms by all that know him, as a diſtinguiſhed nobleman and a finiſhed gentleman—I never ſaw him, but feel an attachment from my knowledge of, and favours conferred by his family, in a courſe of years.

This little hiſtory, I hope, will not be found tireſome to the reader, particularly if peruſed by a native of Ireland; and flatter myſelf it will paſs without cenſure: for, beſides being authentic, I mean, as I purſue my hiſtorical journal, to mix various anecdotes and occurrences, without making it merely a languid ſtage repetition; ſeveral little traits of the ſame complexion and degree will be introduced, which I hope the reader will honour me with patience to endure, as they will in ſome meaſure prove relieving, explanatory, entertaining, and, indeed, are abſolutely neceſſary as a key to the whole.

But to return to my Savoy history:—Added to the noble family lately recurred to, were Mr. and Mrs. William Chaigneau, from Dublin. He was agent to moſt of the regiments on the Iriſh eſtabliſhment, a gentleman univerſally known, and whoſe memory is greatly reſpected: He wrote, for his amuſement, the novel in two volumes called *Jack Connor*.

Mrs. Chaigneau was a lady who attracted the good opinion of every one: They had only one daughter, whom they termed their *Darling Peggy:* This lovely pledge they could not part with on their excurſions from Ireland to England; indeed, ſo careful were they,——"They permitted not the "winds of heaven to viſit her face too roughly."

Mrs. Teague, Mrs. Chaigneau's ſiſter, an intimate of my mother's, honoured me by ſtanding as my godmother at my baptiſm; and in the chit chat and want of matter for converſation, when all were convened a few years after at the friendly fire-ſide, they propoſed a wedding between Maſter Tate Wilkinſon and Miſs Peggy Chaigneau. This was agreed to, and my father actually performed the ceremony; and we were afterwards jokingly called *man and wife*. I believe I might be, at this mock marriage, ſix or ſeven—young Peggy about five or ſix. But to the laſting grief of Mr. and Mrs. Chaigneau they loſt the idol of

their heart in two or three years afterwards, and I was left a diſconſolate young widower. I mention this childiſh incident as it leads to more ſerious matter, hereafter, in this journal of "events and momentous hiſtory."

Alderman Forbes and his Lady—the well known ancient Cornelius Kelly and his wife—and many others made up a convivial Iriſh party at our cheerful board. My father being more attentive to the pleaſures, than the cares of the world, I was ſometimes at a boarding-ſchool, ſometimes not; perhaps ſix months in the year at Chelſea with a Mr. Bellas in Church-lane there; the other ſix at home; the next ſix months at Mr. Tempeſt's near Wandſworth; then again at home, particularly if the winter was ſevere. Some time afterwards I had tutors at home; then I went to Harrow School; but that I ſhall hereafter have occaſion to mention, as introductory to ſomething hiſtorical and whimſical.

It will here eaſily be perceived I was a great pet, which too often produces ignorance and ſtupidity, and ends in misfortunes; in ſhort, the beſt part of my little education may be chiefly attributed to the cares and obſervations of a truly ſenſible, worthy, affectionate, and amiable mother, whoſe conduct was ſuch, as not only to attract, but preſerve the eſteem of all who knew her; nor is her

name ever mentioned to this hour, by any perſon who retains the leaſt recollection of her, but it is followed by the ſigh of affection and true regard; and this equally from ſuperiors or inferiors.

My idle hours, however, were not beſtowed on marbles, cricket, or mixing with intimates of my own age and complexion;—for, except my friend George Forbes, I had but few playmates—For, lo! a prayer-book was ever in my hand—the whole day was employed in reading exhortations, and every part of the church-ſervice: So great a proficient was I in repeating it, that I was often invited to many families to read prayers. This early ſerious turn, gave riſe to the particular notice of Mrs. Townſend, wife of Mr. Richard Townſend, who lived at the corner of Durham-yard, near the weſt end of the ſince built Adelphi. This lady was remarkable for exemplary piety, accompanied with cheerfulneſs and good humour; from which occurred many acts of charity and benevolence. My father had ſuch attraction as a preacher, that ſhe would not have miſſed the Savoy-church on a Sunday on any account; no ſlight indiſpoſition could keep her away; though, from a bad ſtate of health, the Savoy-church was the only place ſhe viſited, unleſs on ſome particular occaſion not to be diſpenſed with.——This good old lady was

own ſiſter to the late Jonas Hanway; a gentleman univerſally known and eſteemed for his many benevolent acts. With this ſaid ſiſter, Mr. Jonas Hanway lived many years: He had been a friend of my father's, continued his good will to me, and was indefatigable in the Spring 1769 in removing the objections ſtarted by Lord Sondes, in regard to my obtaining acts of Parliament for the York and Hull patents: For, unleſs Mr. Jonas Hanway's influence and perſeverance had prevailed on his Lordſhip to withdraw his oppoſition (which at that time, from his ſituation and conſequence in the Houſe, had great weight), it would have prevented, in all probability, my having acquired the honour and credit of either. Captain Hanway, the brother of Jonas, was married by my father to Miſs Stowe, the then reigning toaſt of Newark-upon-Trent.

Beſides the Townſends' conſtant attendance to their religious duties at the Savoy, amongſt my father's pious admirers as a preacher, I remember Mrs. Graham, late Mrs. Yates, never miſſed her pew near the pulpit. Mr. Yates, now living, was a frequent attendant, and can and will teſtify that Dr. Wilkinſon's manner of reading and preaching commanded reſpect and admiration. His diſcourſes were excellent, his voice clear, ſtrong, and ſonorous, and his perſon graceful and handſome.

The few remaining perſons who knew him then will now verify what I advance; for though only reſident ſix weeks at Wakefield, and that not leſs than forty-five years ago, yet his manner of preaching, and forcible oratory, &c. had ſuch ſtrong effects, as to be well recollected at that place to this hour; and was often mentioned by the late Sir Michael Pilkington, who was at that time his intimate.

I being forcibly ſtruck with my father's manner in the ſeveral church ſervices, was never eaſy unleſs I had an old ſurplice thrown over my ſhoulders, and my whole delight was in praying, preaching, burials, &c. I was generally locked up in a room, ſuppoſing it a church; and in a large chair, the bottom taken out, went through the morning or evening ſervice as it happened to occur in the courſe of the day; then replacing the chair bottom, and throwing off the old ſurplice of my father's, that had juſt before occupied my ſhoulders, I mounted and leaned over the back of the ſaid chair, and with mighty authority proceeded with the ſermon; ſeveral of which diſcourſes were my father's.

My father was much pleaſed with this preaching turn, and on his hearing from Mrs. Townſend, my mother, and ſeveral others, how remarkably well I read prayers, and by all univerſally allow-

ed to be the father's own ſon in voice, manner, energy, &c. he pronounced Tate would make a great figure, if brought up to the church.

As it occurs to me this moment, ſo I am certain it will to my reader, who will aſk, How could you, Mr. Tate, ſo audibly go on with this practice of preaching and praying a-loud under the ſame roof with your father, and without his knowledge? That is eaſily anſwered:—For know, good Sir, or Madam, the houſe we then occupied was large enough for three modern ones; old double ſtone ſtair-caſes; and were truly the apartments of King John of France*, when he was priſoner in England: So I had always apartments which I called my own, and they were in conſequence appropriated to my religious rites.

My father, on the intelligence he had received of my pious inclinations, importuned me to read prayers, the litany, &c. by way of ſample, to corroborate what he had heard from Mrs. Townſend, my mother, and others. I cheerfully complied; and on hearing me he much approved, and ſaid he judged my ſeeing plays might aid my ſtrong inclination, as well as contribute and aſſiſt me in the mode of public ſpeaking. Now, reader, don't ſuppoſe this fond father and mo-

* See the Hiſtory of the Savoy.

ther were wicked play-goers;—I do not remember ever hearing of their being at three plays in their whole lives. Moſt probably, had that been the caſe, a playhouſe would have been familiarized to my ear: Not that I mean to convey they had a diſlike to plays; indeed, quite the reverſe: But my father's affairs were generally in an embarraſſed ſtate, and my mother's pocket too much deranged to allow money for ſuch an entertainment; conſequently, tho' ſhe admired and approved of a good play, ſhe was contented with the reading inſtead of ſeeing it: However they both wiſhed to have Tate ſee a play. But having been, when five years old, with my father at a puppet-ſhew at Bartholemew-Fair, which I thought a play, I there ſaw a ſea fight, and a moſt terrible battle, which determined me never to ſee one again;—therefore all propoſals to go to the Theatre were in vain.

When about eight years old, chance threw a Mr. Page in my way. He was then Houſe-keeper of Covent-Garden Theatre, known at that time only by, "Which houſe do you go to this evening—the New Houſe, or the Old?" (Drury Lane.) Mr. Page wiſhed for ſome place then in the power of Lord Cholmondley, with whom my father was intimate; and to ingratiate himſelf the more, (finding neither Dr. Wilkinſon nor his wife viſited

either old or new houſe) he obſerved it was a pity Maſter Tate ſhould not enjoy the diverſions of the theatre.—When I heard this converſation, I felt an inconceivable objection, and dreaded the being forced into ſo terrible a place. My mother obſerved, that Tate would think of prayers only, and could not be perſuaded to ſet his foot in a theatre; but, on after-reflection, they obſerved at what an eaſy rate, from the civility of Mr. Page, this entertainment could be procured, they determined to conquer my obſtinacy by force. So, after my repeated refuſals, my reverend dad at laſt grew really angry, and inſiſted on my going there, with this conditional ſalvo, that if I was not pleaſed, he pledged his honour he would never urge me to ſee another. I, choked with grief, aſſented to this cruelty, as I really thought it was; and when from the Savoy I had with ſlow ſteps arrived at Southampton-ſtreet, I grew ſulky, and the ſervant to whom I was intruſted had actually to drag me to Covent-Garden Theatre. On ſeeing Mr. Page, the man being in livery, Maſter Tate could not be let into the boxes or pit: this I eſteemed a lucky circumſtance to favour my return; indeed had I been left to myſelf, ſoon would I have ſaluted the Savoy ſteps; but the man wiſhing to ſee the play, during this new ſtarted difficulty kept me faſt as his priſoner, I was

conveyed with him, and safely stowed in the upper gallery: instead of receiving pleasure, sighs and sobs employed my time in this terrible place. Neither the noble theatre, nor the music had any charms for me: the whistling of the gods, and other noises of the gallery, only added to my disgust and terror. The play, I well remember, was the Busy Body, with Mr. Foote's Tea—But, O reader! of what materials are we composed!—scarcely had the first act finished before I imagined I was in the elysium I had been praying for; the charms of the church, which the day before were so attractive and sublime, were dissolved—

> And, like the baseless fabric of a Vision,
> Left not a wreck behind.

The theatre from that time banished all my fervent piety, and my whole thoughts were occupied with the fascinating charms of the playhouse, actors, and actresses. My father—(O wicked man! says one of the mock saints) was pleased with the change, and said he was sure it would be the means of making me a better preacher: I now reversed my late tabernacle—and employed my evenings in lighting pieces of candle, dressing in any fantastical attire, and repeated, as well as I could recollect, parts in plays I had seen; which that Spring were nine in number. From early in January to March, I took

great care to visit Mr. Page every morning for play bills; and was a constant attendant by permission, at the morning rehearsals. In March I was sent to Mr. Tempest's school near Wandsworth, where a nephew and two sons of Mr. Page's were placed; and I saw no more plays till the Winter following.

At the time I have now mentioned seeing plays at Covent-Garden Theatre, Mr. Quin had retired to Bath, from whence he wrote the following laconic note, in November, 1747:

"I am at Bath.

"Yours,

"JAMES QUIN."

Which note was as laconically answered:

"Stay there and be damn'd.

"Yours,

"JOHN RICH."

Every actor of consequence was engaged by Mr. Garrick for Drury-Lane, except the Mr. Quin just mentioned: This was Garrick's first year as manager. At Covent Garden, in the month of February, they only acted three times in the week, and frequently dismissed; and were in truth a wretched company, and low in public estimation. Mr. Foote's Tea, which he had given as an entertainment at Covent-Garden Theatre in February 1748, he had first acted in 1746, at the

Hay Market; it was then called The Diverſions of the Morning, attended with great good fortune, and every ſucceſs his moſt ſanguine wiſhes could ſuggeſt; but this being noticed by the Patentees of Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden, as an entertainment ſtarted in defiance of the ſevere act about that time paſſed, when Lord Cheſterfield had obſerved in the Houſe of Lords, "How cruel it was to lay a tax on ſo ſcarce a commodity as wit."—"Wit," continues Lord Cheſterfield, "is a ſort of property of thoſe that "have it, and too often the only property they "have to depend on.—It is, indeed, but a precari-"ous dependence.—Thank God! we, my Lords, "have a dependence of another kind."

Mr. Foote had in this moment not only alarmed the treaſury of the royal theatres; but, from his mimicry, had rouſed the indignation and reſentment of all the performers. Application was made in conſequence to the Lord Chamberlain, who ſent to the juſtices of that diſtrict, and the new raiſed troops were put to flight, by a ſuperior force of conſtables entering the theatre in terrible array! The audience was diſmiſſed,—and the laughing Ariſtophanes left leaning towards Melpomene, in doleful ſoliloquy.

After many days anxiety from ſuffering this diſgrace, a lucky thought occurred to him:—Being

certain of the good will of the Town, he advertiſed "Mr. Foote's compliments to his friends and the "public, deſiring them to drink Tea at the Little "Theatre at the Hay-Market, every morning, at "the play-houſe prices."—The joke ſucceeded—the houſe was crowded—and he advanced before the curtain—being privately aſſured of protection, (his friends having been previouſly convened and informed of his intention) and ſaid—That while the Tea was preparing, as he was then training ſome young actors for the ſtage, he would, with their permiſſion, proceed with his inſtructions. This manœuvre was highly reliſhed; and it became the univerſal faſhion every noon to drink a diſh of Mr. Foote's Tea; and, for two or three years, he termed pieces of imitation *giving of Tea*. And thence aroſe the puzzle which often happened to myſelf (ſome years after) on my giving Tea; and it frequently ſtarted difficulties and chagrin to a country audience.

The run of this morning's diverſion occaſioned the actors one and all to exclaim they ſhould be ruined by his mimicry; therefore Mr. Foote very pleaſantly ſaid, Since that was the caſe, it was his duty to provide a ſituation for each lady and gentleman, ſo circumſtanced; and that, inſtead of murdering blank verſe, and aſſuming the characters of Kings and Queens, Lords and Ladies,

for which their abilities were far from being ſuitable, he would place them where their talents and behaviour could with more propriety be employed:

Mr. QUIN,—from his ſonorous voice and weighty manner he appointed—*a Watchman:*

AS THUS;

" Paſt twelve o'clock, and a cloudy morning."

Mr. DELANE—was ſuppoſed to have but one eye, therefore he fixed him as—*a Beggar Man in St. Paul's Church-yard:*

" Would you beſtow your pity on a poor blind " man."

Mr. RYAN,—whoſe voice for oddity and ſhrillneſs was remarkable,—*a Razor Grinder:*

" Razors to grind, ſciſſars to grind, penknives " to grind."

Mrs. WOFFINGTON,—though beautiful to a degree had a moſt unpleaſant ſqueaking pipe,—*an Orange Woman to the Playhouſe:*

" Would you have ſome oranges,—have ſome " orange chips, ladies and gentlemen,—would " you have ſome nonparcils,—would you have " a bill of the play?"

Mr. WOODWARD,—he was puzzled to find any trade he was fit for, therefore ſpoke the following ſpeech, in his voice and manner, from Sir Fopling Flutter.

"Wherever I go, there goes a gentleman—"upon my life a gentleman, and when you have "ſaid a gentleman, why, O! [*here Foote dropt "Woodward's voice and manner*] you have ſaid "more than is true."

He was alſo very ſevere on GARRICK, who was apt to heſitate, (in his dying ſcenes in particular) as in the character of Lothario——

——————————"adorns my fall, and "chea—chea—chea—chea—chea—chears my heart "in dy—dy—dying."

Foote's Tea, remembered by me ſo well from that time, when I became advanced in life made it ſeem ſtrange that almoſt every perſon two hundred miles from the metropolis was not as well acquainted with it as myſelf, who had lived in London, without conſidering my long reſidence there had ſtamped a ſtronger remembrance on me than on three parts out of four of the reſt of the inhabitants of that city.

To elucidate this matter I need only inſtance Mr. Foote's pieces even of modern date, moſt of

them ſtrongly pointed, animated, and bold in the drawing, not deſtitute of great wit in the compoſition, and pleaſing to a degree in the repreſentation,—yet being local, and at the ſame time merely drawn for reflections on the follies of the day, their merit and claim to ſupport cannot prevent their poſting to oblivion; while, for years to come, we ſhall behold pieces of inferior merit, only aided by flimſy inſipid mediocrity, proceed with dulneſs, and make their exit with a natural decay. Elizabeth Canning, Mary Squires the gipſey, and Miſs Blandy, were ſuch univerſal topics in 1752, that you would have ſuppoſed it the buſineſs of mankind, to talk only of them; yet now, in 1790, aſk a young man of twenty-five or thirty a queſtion relative to theſe extraordinary perſonages, and he will be puzzled to anſwer, and will ſay—"What mean you by enquiring?—I "do not underſtand you."——The following lines from Mr. Foote's prologue of 1753 will prove how occurences are remembered or forgotten.

The many various objects that amuſe
This buſy curious time by way of news,
Are plays, elections, murders, lott'ries, Jews;
All theſe compounded fly throughout the nation,
And ſet the whole in one great fermentation!
True Britiſh hearts the ſame high ſpirits ſhow,
Be they to damn a farce, or fight a foe.

One day for liberty the Briton fires,
The next he flames—for Canning, or for Squires.
In like extremes your laughing humour flows;
Have you not roar'd from pit to upper rows,
And all the jeſt was,—what?—a fiddler's noſe*!
Purſue your mirth; each night the joke grows ſtronger,
For as you fret the man, his noſe looks longer.

And ſtrange to add, that *Noſey*, from the uſe of being loudly called for in 1753, is ſtill retained by the galleries, particularly at preſent in the York circuit; where, without compliment, the leader is a man of great profeſſional merit, but has a noſe as much too long as the manager's is too ſhort!

The Tea of mine for two or three years after I firſt went on the ſtage, I judged would be an encreaſe of laſting ſucceſs, although the ſeaſon 1747, when Mr. Foote was at Covent-Garden giving his Tea, proved, that though a blazing comet two years before, all attraction was over, the wonder had ceaſed, and no longer brought griſt

* "The perſon here intended is Monſ. Cervetti, (engaged at Drury-Lane many years before the trial of Elizabeth Canning) who has been a ſtanding joke with the upper-gallery, for a long time paſt, on account of the length of his noſe; but as I am informed that no features of his mind are out of proportion, unleſs it be that his good qualities are extraordinary, I take this opportunity to mention, that it is cruel to render him uneaſy in the buſineſs, in which he is eminent, and by which he muſt get a livelihood." *Note to Foote's Prologue.*

to his mill. Now, let the tide be ever ſo ſtrong, yet thoſe ladies or gentlemen, whether favoured by Melpomene or Thalia, if they flatter themſelves with thinking like Alonzo——

Seen for ever yet for ever new,

will find themſelves deceived, and will fail in two points, unleſs they attend to prudence and œconomy, and by thoſe means ſecure an independence, which will greatly add to the continuance of faſhion beyond its natural flirtation. And as a weak conſtitution is often prolonged by ſtrict attention to preſervatives;—ſo the performer who is ſecure in purſe may look big and frighten the folks with a threat of—"I will leave the ſtage."—Beſides what a happineſs it is to have a reſerve againſt——

The thouſand ills that fleſh is heir to.

In the early part of the winter 1748 I was brought from Wandſworth to keep my birth-day on the 27th of October, and again after Chriſtmas to ſee two plays; then again at Whitſuntide to ſee Mrs. Woffington in Sir Harry Wildair, and Apollo and Daphne—and Harlequin get into a quart bottle, being the year of the Bottle Conjuror. I complained of great ſeverity indeed, as my father and mother had been ſo cruel as to keep me nine months out of the twelve at ſchool.

This ſeaſon was much ſuperior to the former one

at Covent-Garden, as Mr. Quin returned from his Bath retirement,—Mr. Delane and Mr. Luke Sparks from Drury-Lane—alſo Mrs. Woffington;—and, from Dublin, Mrs. Ward and Miſs Bellamy, who made her firſt appearance in Belvidera.—The following bill will give an idea of the company.

By the COMPANY of COMEDIANS.

At the

THEATRE-ROYAL in *Covent-Garden*,

This present Monday, being the 17th of Oct. 1748, will be presented

The FIRST PART of

King HENRY the Fourth,

With the Humours of *Sir John Falstaff*.

The Part of *Sir John Falstaff* to be performed

By Mr. QUIN.

The *King* by Mr. SPARKS,

(It being the first Time of his Appearance on that Stage.)

The *Prince of Wales* by Mr. RYAN.

Prince John, Westmoreland, Northumberland } by { Miss Hippisley. Mr. Hoffman. Mr. Paget.

Sir Walter Blunt, Douglas, Vernon } by { Mr. Ridout. Mr. Anderson. Mr. Gibson.

Worcester by Mr. DANCE*.

The *Two Carriers* by Mr. ARTHUR and Mr. DUNSTALL.

Francis by Mr. COLLINS.

Gadshill, Bardolph, Peto } by { Mr. Bencraft. Mr. Marten. Mr. Stoppelaer.

Sheriff, Traveller, Hostess } by { Mr. Oates. Mr. Smith. Mrs. Bambridge.

Lady Piercy by Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

And the Part of *Hotspur* to be performed

By Mr. DELANE,

Who has not appear'd on that Stage these Seven Years.

Boxes, 5s.—Pit, 3s.—First Gal. 2s.—Upper Gal. 1s.

No Persons to be admitted behind the Scenes, or any Money to be returned after the Curtain is drawn up.

PLACES for the BOXES to be taken of Mr. PAGE, at the Stage-door of the THEATRE.

* Brother to the late City Architect. He was afterwards called Mr. LOVE.

N. B. These Persons were *then* in their Prime, but are all *since* dead.

When in town, every morning, by Mr. Page's permiſſion, I attended the rehearſal: There the deſire to become an actor at only ten years of age appeared very conſpicuous, and will fully prove and clear an error conceived by Mr. Churchill, (who was afterwards convinced to the contrary) that Mr. Foote inſtructed me in the art of imitation; which was neither truth, nor within the bounds of poſſibility: My frequent morning's admittance at the theatre, for two years, intoxicated my brain, and when I returned from that (to me) moſt luxurious treat, my mind was ſolely employed with acting and ſtudying plays, particularly thoſe I had ſeen and which had made the deepeſt impreſſion. I formed a mad idea thus early that I was certainly a manager of a theatre; and when locked up in a room, I there ſuppoſed myſelf, by turns, the different perſons I had obſerved. This rehearſing frenzy increaſed to ſuch a degree that at laſt I fitted up a room in a theatrical manner; as a proof I have now ſeveral hundred of my play-bills, in full-ſized paper, wrote in red and black, and could at this inſtant as eaſily tell what plays, farces, and pantomimes were performed at my theatre in the Savoy, with a knowledge of all the performers, whether married, ſingle, old, or young, and what they played, as if all the viſion had been realized—The bills I have often produ-

ced, not as a proof of my ſenſe, but infanity, or theatrical influenza.

The rehearſals that year were very regular at Covent-Garden. The ſcenes for Volpone, Henry IV. and their ſtock plays, (for, at that houſe, they ſeldom acted new ones or revived old ones) were regularly changed—and all was awful ſilence.—Mr. Quin was ſole monarch, and had a manner moſt terrible to the under performers, carpenters, &c.; if he ſpied me within two yards of the wings—"Get away, boy!"—and ſtruck his cane with ſuch violence as made me tremble.

Mrs. Woffington had that year left David Garrick for more reaſons than one:—Firſt, ſhe had (before he proved a falſe ſwain) lived with the charming Garrick, who wrote a favourite ſong called *Lovely Peggy*——

Once more I'll tune the vocal ſhell,
O'er hills and dales my paſſion tell, &c.

She was mortified at his marriage, for ſhe loſt the reigning ſway ſhe expected to have had in ſharing the cares of monarchy.—Mrs. Pritchard's diviſion of characters hurt her; and Mrs. Clive, who was ſuperior to fear, was a conſtant thorn. So much has been ſaid of Mrs. Woffington, that it is needleſs to mention her Lady Townly, Lady Betty, &c.—An elegant figure in breeches—ſhe looked and acted Sir Harry Wildair with ſuch ſpi-

rit and deportment, that she gave flat contradiction to what Farquhar asserted,—That when Wilks died, Sir Harry Wildair might go to the Jubilee;—and yet so far has his prophecy been fully verified, no male performer, even Garrick or Woodward, succeeded, but all have failed in that part; she repeated it with never ceasing applause for several years. Her excellence, when at Drury-Lane, occasioned the following joke, which I do not give as new, but hope it will bear the repeating.

Dame Clive and that lady were ever at variance: Mrs. Woffington coming into the green-room, after a favourite scene in Sir Harry, in high spirits, exultingly said to Mrs Clive—She had got so much applause, that, by the living God! she believed one half of the audience took her for a man.—"O!"—says Clive, *archly*—"do not be uneasy, "as you are satisfied the other half know the con-"trary."

The early part of this season I had been at a correct rehearsal of the Careless Husband—Lord Foppington, Mr. Cibber; Sir Charles Easy, Mr. Ryan; Lord Morelove, Mr. Delane; Lady Lasy, Mrs. Ward; Lady Graveairs, Mrs. Hale; Edging, Mrs. Ridout; Lady Betty Modish, Mrs. Woffington;——after which I hastened home to repeat what I could recollect. My mother observing me so particular, stood at the room door to listen, as she thought she heard a talking, and

hearing me pronounce in a ſtrange voice---" My Lord Foppington give me my ſnuff-box."—— She, after dinner, deſired to know what I was talking of when ſhut up by myſelf? I was rather perplexed, and ſaid—I had fancied all that day I was ſometimes Mr. Cibber, but oftener Mrs. Woffington, as ſhe had acted Lady Betty delightfully. On this ſhe ſent for the play, and I ſtudied different parts of it, and alſo the firſt ſcene of Sir John and Lady Brute, which I had ſeen that winter: I was then, I believe, very like Mr. Quin and Mrs. Woffington; nay, am certain I was, as I can repeat the ſame at this inſtant in like manner; a proof what force firſt impreſſions make in the days of our youth.

This ſoon produced (when I was viſiting abroad, or when we had company at home) an intreaty for Maſter Tate to act Mr. Quin and Mrs. Woffington: The applauſe of the company added fuel to the flame.——Drury-Lane Theatre I did not ſee till the ſeaſon 1750, and, ſtrange to tell! did not wiſh to go there, ſo ſtrongly was I attached to ſweet Covent-Garden;—and a ſomething like hallowed ground, to this moment, occaſions reverence and awe for the ſteps and avenues of that theatre. A full houſe at Covent-Garden, then, was pleaſing intelligence:—The preference and ſucceſs of Garrick and Drury-Lane I could not reliſh.—

This employment I purſued with unremitting ſlavery, even to the prejudice of health.

In September 1749, I had an ague and fever, which could not be conquered, but kept me confined all the winter, except being permitted to ſee three plays: Lady Jane Grey was one, and to this moment I recollect Quin, ſaying in Gardiner, "I hold no ſpeech with hereticks and traitors."

September 1750 was the remarkable year Barry and Cibber joined forces with Quin and Woffington at Covent-Garden, as alſo Macklin. On ſeeing Mr. Barry and Mrs. Cibber, leſſened in my opinion the merit I had alone allowed to my firſt favorites, Mr. Quin and Mrs. Woffington. The run of Romeo and Juliet was that ſeaſon, when the famous controverſy happened between the two houſes on account of this play, and which commenced at both Theatres on Friday the 28th of September. The following is an exact bill of the Covent-Garden play.

By the COMPANY of COMEDIANS.

At the

THEATRE-ROYAL in *Covent-Garden.*

This preſent Friday, being the 28th of Sept. 1750, *will be preſented a Play, call'd*

ROMEO AND JULIET.

The Part of *Romeo* to be performed

By Mr. BARRY.

(Being the firſt Time of his Appearing on that Stage.)

Capulet by Mr. SPARKS.

Montague by Mr. BRIDGEWATER.

Eſcalus by Mr. ANDERSON. | *Paris* by Mr. LACEY.
Benvolio by Mr. GIBSON. | *Lady Capulet* by Mrs. BARRINGTON.

Fryar Laurence by Mr. RIDOUT.

Gregory by Mr. ARTHUR. | *Abram* by Mr. DUNSTALL.
Sampſon by Mr. COLLINS. | *Balthazar* by Mr. BRANSBY.

Mercutio by Mr. MACKLIN.

Tibalt by Mr. DYER.

Nurſe by Mrs. MACKLIN.

And the Part of *Juliet* to be performed

By Mrs. CIBBER.

An additional ſcene will be introduced, repreſenting

The Funeral Proceſſion of JULIET,

Which will be accompanied with

A SOLEMN DIRGE,

The Muſic compoſed by Mr. ARNE.

With an occaſional Prologue to be ſpoken

By Mr. BARRY.

Boxes, 5s.—Pit, 3s.—Firſt Gal. 2s.—Upper Gal. 1s.

PLACES for the Boxes to be taken of Mr. PAGE, at the Stage-door of the THEATRE.

To begin exactly at Six o'Clock.

The firſt play I ſaw at Drury-Lane was that year;—it was the Mourning Bride—Oſmyn, Mr. Garrick; Zara, Mrs. Pritchard; Almeria, Miſs Bellamy.—Garrick was not in my ſecret opinion ſo enchanting as Barry—Miſs Bellamy very inferior indeed to Mrs. Cibber—but Mrs. Pritchard's Zara ſtruck me with admiration. The farce was Lethe; in which the characters were ſo inimitably performed by Woodward, Yates, Shuter, Blakes, Miſs Minors, and Mrs. Clive, that I felt actually angry at myſelf for being ſo pleaſed with the performers of the Old Houſe, when in a comparative view with my favorites of the New. I mention this, as an inſtance of the force of obſtinate and headſtrong partiality, whether we are young or old; and am ſorry to obſerve, that conviction or reaſon, will not conquer our prejudices as we grow old, any more than prevail over the ſentiments of waxen youth.

The Winter of 1750, I ſaw ſeveral plays; and for fear of being tainted with the prevailing powers of Drury-Lane, entered not that faſhionable place of reſort. The end of the ſeaſon Mr. Quin left the ſtage; the opening play in the September following, (1751) was the Recruiting Officer, at Covent-Garden; Mrs. Woffington's name was inſerted for Sylvia, but on ſome ſudden

diſagreement ſhe went off for Ireland, and a Mrs. Vincent performed the part.

In October 1751, was Mr. Moſſop's and Mr. Roſs's firſt appearance at Drury-Lane, in the characters of Richard and young Bevil. I paſſed my time as the preceding ſeaſon, only with this difference, that I attended both Theatres; they cloſed as uſual.—In the Autumn, what I had ardently wiſhed for, two years before, came to paſs; as my being ſent to Harrow School was put into real practice, by my coming to the age of thirteen, the enſuing 7th of Nov. 1752, (being the year of the New Style). This, when at a diſtance, I thought pleaſing, but for a Manager a Critic, to be ſent to ſchool, was a ſtroke of real grief and horror; my pride prevented me from owning the truth, for I had ſometime before petitioned for this indulgence, therefore would not let my veracity or reſolution be called in queſtion.—So, O woeful day! to Harrow School I was conveyed by my mother; where, on ſeeing my friend George Forbes, I endeavoured to compoſe myſelf, and ſubmit to ſlavery. He introduced me to the Duke of Gordon, and his brother, Lord Adam Gordon; alſo at that ſchool, (which was then ſecond only to Eaton in this kingdom,) were Lord Downe, Sir John Ruſſiate, and the Capt. Dives's, to whom I have been much obliged. But

inſtead of the place becoming more eaſy by habit, the manager roſe ſtrongly in my heated imagination:—Studying a play was the employment of a man, but going to ſchool, the God of Idleneſs convinced me was intolerable;—I therefore reſolved on a retreat, not doubting but if I related to my mother, that I had ſeen three boys whipt, ſhe would relent and receive me home again, and ſoften all reſentment from my father, who humoured me to a greater degree than ſhe did herſelf; but when he was in a paſſion, which thank God was but ſeldom, it was dreadful! To execute with wiſdom and diſcretion, ſuch a dangerous undertaking, the good, the unfortunate Andrée uſed not more precaution.—I waited for a public holiday, and loading my pockets with oranges and gingerbread the night before, got up at ſix in the morning, and proceeded down Harrow-Hill; unfortunately, not being accuſtomed to the road, I turned to the right, and every now and then looked up to ſpy if any one was purſuing me, ſo ſtrong is guilt.——

> Suſpicion ever haunts the guilty mind—
> The thief doth fear each buſh an officer.

Having walked for ſome time, I read on a ſtone "One mile to Partington," or ſome ſuch name; I was alarmed, and haſtened back to my old

ground, the bottom of the hill: If I looked behind, and saw a man on horseback, I was sure he was in pursuit of me. I soon reached the fifth mile-stone, where some men were at work on the roads; here I was again puzzled, by a separation of two broad carriage-ways, and fearing a second blunder, said, "Pray, good men, which is the road to London?" "Why," says one of them--"to the left; but I am afraid, young gentleman, you have run away from school?"—"No indeed," says I, and to convince him he was wrong, took the only method to prove him quite in the right, by immediately taking to my heels. The men laughed, and cried, "Catch him,—stop him."—I was truly a frightened hare. After stumbling, running, &c. at last I was obliged from sickness and great fatigue to stop; but, finding no pursuers, in about ten minutes I continued my journey, and got safe into London: When advanced beyond the purlieus, I stopped at a coffee-house, and breakfasted. One danger being over, I now began, when hunger was satisfied, to feel other qualms, which were the approach of home: I walked very slow, and got to the Savoy, just as the bell was ringing for prayers; I sauntered till it ceased, well knowing that my father was then secure, and for fear of mistake took a peep to be certain that he read the prayers. That point being settled to my sa-

tisfaction, I rapped at the door, and ſoon with perfect eaſe, aſked my mother how ſhe did.—Her ſurpriſe was great—all my relation of cruelties, and whipping the little boys would not avail; ſhe expoſtulated on the great expence of the entrance to the maſters, as Dr. Thackerey, Mr. Prior, &c.—ſaid ſhe would ſoften the matter as well as ſhe could—but back I muſt go—I was ordered to retire; and on ſo doing, my reflections were by no means the moſt pleaſant. When commanded into the preſence of my father, I was conditionally pardoned; but after a bit of dinner, for which I had not the leaſt appetite, a chaiſe was ordered, and a ſervant ſent with me, who was to ſtop the carriage at the bottom of Harrow Hill, in order if poſſible, that my diſgrace of running away might be a ſecret. This I was obliged to ſubmit to, and I arrived at the fatal ſpot, like a culprit prepared for execution; but when I came to the borders of the village, I ſoon heard the warhoop of Indians, and perceived almoſt the whole ſchool aſſembled, and ready to tar and feather me for my flight.

From many tokens of intelligence and ſearching enquiries, I was ſoon diſcovered to have been more than merely out of bounds. I therefore like a poor deſerter, wanted no more than handcuffs, to make my appearance and contrition truly

in character, when, like a god, my friend George Forbes appeared, (who was held in great reſpect and eſteem) drew me from my diſagreeable ſituation, and under his arm conveyed me ſafe to Mr. Reeves's (the writing maſter) houſe, where I was boarded, and delivered me from the hands of the Philiſtines. Mr. and Mrs. Reeves were of a a genteel turn; and what do you think, good reader, better than that,—they were critics, and fond of plays; and what was better ſtill, Mrs. Reeves's ſiſter (then on a viſit) was play and romance mad; but at this time of diſtreſs, I was not acquainted with thoſe delightful circumſtances; however they were kind, not auſtere upon my diſgrace; and Mr. Reeves interfered to prevent the deſerter's corporal puniſhment; but the adventure reached the ear of Admiral Forbes, who fearing my bad example might have an ill effect on his nephew, over whom he judged I had great influence, which might occaſion his taking a trip over to Dublin, to ſee *his mamma*, inſiſted on my being made an example of terror, by way of prevention.

Dr. Thackerey, was as benign and humane a man, as ever was placed at the head of ſuch an unruly community as a public ſchool; but the Reverend Prior, loved to lift his arm up for the awful flogging, better than Fielding's Parſon Thwackum, and judged himſelf robbed of his

rights, when he was prevented from putting in force his love of torture; he was in truth a deſpicable, ſevere, and diſagreeable tyrant: But on the hint being given, while he went out of the great ſchool-room, I believe I might be ſpeaking a little too loud, when the head ſcholar ordered me to ſtand before the throne, and am ſorry to ſay, except from my friend George Forbes, I perceived univerſal exultation; for the lad that runs away is looked on like the cowardly ſoldier who retires on the day of battle: Soon entered Governor Prior, who with exulting features, ordered me to be prepared and brought immediately to the block, and, to ſtrike terror, deſired attention to his ſkill on the occaſion; and as what muſt be, muſt be, I patiently reſigned to my cruel fate. He never acted the barbarian better——

> The blood did follow where the rod was driven,
> The fleſh did quiver where the birchen tore;
> But that was foreign to the ſoul——
> Not all his ſtrokes, or energetic arm
> Cou'd force a groan away that he might gueſs at.

This proved in fact a moſt lucky adventure—as misfortunes paſt prove ſtories of delight; for, when ſchool was over, I was generally ſaluted and applauded for my heroiſm, and from that time was on good terms with all the ſcholars. My boarding-houſe became every day more fa-

tisfactory; for my fond mother, to keep me eafy under my bondage, after fuch a life of indulgence as I had been accuftomed to, was even near in her family expences, and denied herfelf what was abfolutely neceffary, in order to fend Tate luxuries, fuch as tea, fugar, nice chickens, bottles of wine, pound cake, &c. with the play-bills of the week: thofe prefents I gave to Mrs. Reeves, which occafioned an intimacy, and my fitting up to fupper; this brought on ftage converfation, and from that I was afked, whenever they had company, to act plays. So confidering myfelf as a manager in diftrefs, the time paffed tolerably pleafant till December. We had only one difpute, which was Mr. Reeves's pronouncing Garrick not only the beft actor, but what was more intolerable, the beft Romeo; to which I muft have yielded, had not the wife declared entirely on my fide of the argument, and wondered her hufband could make fuch a comparifon—the fifter avowed the fame; and they both agreed that Barry was a charming man, and made love like an angel, to which I affented and fignificantly faid, It was not worth contending; for it really was not every one that faw a play who was a perfect judge of acting.

It may not be improper to obferve how neceffary it is to make every one a wellwither, inftead of an enemy:—Friends are happy circumftances;

they are the foundation-ſtone of human greatneſs, from the higheſt to the loweſt;—civility is worth the preſerving, for if offended, a Star and Garter may find himſelf hurt by the rudeneſs of a black-guard: Therefore as many friends as poſſible it is our intereſt to procure, provided they can be gained without deſcending to meanneſs.—A few inſignificant enemies are not amiſs, they rouſe the ſpirits to action and vigour; while the kindneſs of friends and ſelf-love are ſo far from improving the mental faculties, that they only act on the underſtanding as laudanum, and all real genius is lulled into lethargy and ſluggiſhneſs.

From my civility to Mrs. Reeves's ſiſter, I was not only made of ſome little conſequence at Harrow; but the ſequel will prove it led to an *important* part of my future life.

While at Mr. Reeves's, a theatrical fête was to be given before the Chriſtmas holidays in the great ſchool-room, as the cuſtom had been for ſome years to act three nights before that period, to which all the families from Stanmore and the adjacent villages were invited; the room was very commodious for ſuch a purpoſe. Shapes were borrowed from Mr. Rich, who, it ſeems, always obliged the ſchool on ſuch occaſions. Dr. Thackerey (the good governor) fixed on the Roman Father for the leading ſcholars to enact.

The first night the play was presented I was an auditor, but Mrs. Reeves and her sister were stung to the quick; their pride was hurt to think their favourite boarder, and such a promising actor, had not a chance for fame, and a share of the applause at this public time.

Mrs. Reeves's sister felt herself so unhappy on this trivial matter, that she waited on Dr. Thackerey with me in her hand, and requested I might rehearse Lord and Lady Townly, which the Doctor good-naturedly assented to; and I instantly performed Lord Townly, *a-la-mode* Barry—Lady Townly, *a-la-mode* Woffington, which actually broke through the buckram of the college and the Doctor's accustomed solemnity, and he and his good woman laughed very heartily; for though he never saw more than three or four plays in a year, and that during the Christmas recess, the transition of voice and manner from Barry to Woffington, pleased the Doctor so much, that he actually sent for his eldest son Frederick, and desired him to study the first scene of Lord Townly, and ordered it to precede the Roman Father the next play-night; to which Mr. Frederick like a good son acquiesced, promised to be perfect, bowed, retired, and kept his word. Mrs. Reeves's sister and I returned in triumph, and, after congratulations of success on our embassy, much consultation was ne-

ceſſary for the equipment and the attire of Lady Townly, as if a matter of the utmoſt importance. What they could not furniſh me with, was borrowed from their connexions in the neighbourhood, and with infinite pains attended to the manner and taſte they were to ſhew on the *entrée* of the new performer.

After, not leſs than three hours in the equipment, a chair (which I wonder at in ſo ſmall a place) was to be hired, to convey me to Harrow-Theatre, and not I aſſure you without ſome emotion: not that my firſt acting ſeemed diſtreſſing, nor was it particular my playing Lady Townly, as two young gentlemen of family perſonated Horatia, and Valeria; and as to dreſs, my Engliſh attire as much ſurpaſſed the Roman ladies on this occaſion, as Mrs. Bellamy's new Paris-dreſs is aſſerted by her to have outſhone Mrs. Woffington's, when they acted the Rival Queens: However not having in reality played before any number of perſons fit to be termed an audience, it gave me a tremor natural to all young actors. My performance was ſo much ſuperior, and ſo infinitely more like a theatrical one, than that of the young gentlemen who acted in the Roman Father, that I bore away the palm, notwithſtanding Publius was repreſented by a Lord! Nor is it to be wondered at, as they played only from an

eſtabliſhed cuſtom of the ſchool; therefore merely judged it a pleaſing relief, as by ſo doing for ten or twelve days they relinquiſhed the dryer ſtudies of Greek and Latin; but no more likely to make a figure as actors, without the poſſeſſion of the God, than thoſe young perſons were, who are related to have acted with Garrick when he was a child at Litchfield; for they, as his play-mates, performed merely from civility and compliance to his will, whilſt we may venture to pronounce *his* whole ſoul was in agitation.

The effect of my Lady Townly was ſurpriſing indeed; ſo much ſo, that every one of the audience ſpoke to me with marks of attention, and an univerſal requeſt was made the next night, (the laſt of playing) that I would not only oblige them with Lady Townly, but ſome other part, to try my ſkill in contraſt—for they were pleaſed to add, that every one was delighted; and thoſe phraſes are not to be wondered at as the ſpeeches of parents and neighbours at a ſchool play. I do not imagine any one night of real ſucceſs, when even attended with the *pecunia*, ever gave me more exquiſite pleaſure;—joy without meaſure to feel myſelf, on ſuch a public occaſion, the firſt mark of attention, as a theatrical performer, at a place of ſuch conſequence as Harrow School.

The requeſt of the additional performance the

enſuing play-night, (which had my ſecret and eager wiſhes of compliance) Dr. Thackerey not only aſſented to, but gave his approbation. I, being attached to Mr. Barry's acting, fixed on the garden-ſcene in Romeo and Juliet to precede the Roman Father, and Lady Townly after the play. But here a difficulty ſtarted, which was no leſs than the want of a Juliet; for though Mr. Frederick Thackerey had conſented to be Lord Townly, he would not ſubmit to be my Juliet. This occaſioned a demur; but Sir John Ruſſiate, on hearing of the obſtacle, removed all inconvenience, by obligingly offering himſelf for Juliet, and this mighty matter was immediately concluded, and as ſpeedily put into practice; but as I did not ſuppoſe a man of quality could be ſo good a performer as myſelf, I therefore, manager-like, taught Sir John ſome of Mrs. Cibber's ſtriking manner in the particular paſſages,—which did not a little add to my ſelf-opinion. The third night finiſhed to the extent of my ambition—I *looked*, *talked*, *walked*, and *felt* myſelf a great actor.——Such Things Were! Such Things Are! and Such Things may be yet to come, as muſt decide whether my play of life will end with, All in the Right, or All in the Wrong? If All in the Right, I ſhall then conclude like Panglos, "That All has been for the Beſt."

On my return to ſupper at Mr. Reeves's, they were as proud and pleaſed as if their own ſon had met with the ſame approbation. Indeed my thanks were due to them;—for this little eſteem which I acquired at the ſchool, &c. certainly was owing not only to their thought, but they had even gone lengths beyond their ſituation in accompliſhing a matter that required ſome degree of difficulty and addreſs. Every one who turns over theſe leaves will reflect how fortunate it was for me to be boarded with a family that would condeſcend to humour me; had I been placed in a moroſe boarding-houſe, bred up as I had been, (or rather not bred at all) I muſt have led the life of a ſulky Negro ſlave—But better things, thank God, were in ſtore.

I cannot quit Harrow for the Chriſtmas receſs without recollecting that my ſtage ſucceſs, as I then termed it, at that place, occaſioned ſerious reflections from the wiſe directors: For my exhibition (from the peculiarity of what I attempted) was the groundwork of public converſation in the circle of Harrow critics; it was therefore judged truly neceſſary to convene a cabinet council, which was directly ſummoned, where it was agreed on mature deliberation, *nemine contradicente*, not in future to have any more plays acted by the young gentlemen at Harrow School: The annual cuſtom was therefore aboliſhed, and I

am told that law has been ſtrictly adhered to from that time to this, as they feared it might get the appellation of (and an idle report be circulated in the world, that it was) a ſchool for breeding up actors in lieu of ſcholars. Though without doubt, ſince that period, private plays having been ſo very faſhionable, many changes of opinion muſt have occurred for the improvement of that little ſtate ſince my happy acting there in Dec. 1752—but I judge, had the ancient cuſtom been revived and tolerated, the newſpapers or ſome chance intelligence would have before this fully informed me. Adieu to Harrow-Hill, and hey for the Chriſtmas holidays, Savoy, and Plays!

I was received at home, as uſual, with fondneſs and partiality even to a fault: If aſked a queſtion relative to the progreſs I had made in my learning, I quickly anſwered it with relating the fine play we had performed, and that was ſufficient; but more ſo, when I aſſured them, I was the leading actor; and father and mother were ſo pleaſed they determined Tate ſhould not be diſappointed of his darling amuſement. I viſited as ſoon as poſſible my favourite palaces of Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden, and if money was ever ſo ſhort at home, it was raiſed by ſome means, no matter how difficult.

I particularly recollect ſeeing on Saturday the 30th of December, the Siege of Damaſcus—

Phocyas, *Barry*; Eumenes, *Ryan*; Caled, *Sparks*; Abudah, *Ridout*; Eudocia, Mrs. *Cibber*; with the dances of *Il Paſtore* and *Il Morlaco*, by Signor *Maraneſi*, and Signora *Bugiani*, two excellent dancers;—by the bye the dances at that time were greatly ſupported, very different from what they are at the Theatres now.—*Cooke* and *Hilliard*, both in a firſt degree, were added to the *Maraneſi* and the *Bugiani*. The entertainment was Apollo and Daphne, by command of his Royal Highneſs Frederick Prince of Wales, who ſeldom went to Drury-Lane; what were the reaſons to have occaſioned a diſguſt I cannot give, or even gueſs at—Had it been out of compliment to old Quin, who had the inſtruction of his preſent Majeſty in his youth, it might in ſome meaſure have accounted for it; as Quin often exclaimed, on being told that his Majeſty delivered his maiden ſpeech with gracefulneſs and preciſion—"Ay, I "knew it would be ſo—for *I* taught the boy to "ſpeak." But in 1753 that cauſe had ceaſed, as Quin had retired in the ſpring 1751 to Bath, and quitted the ſtage, but the Prince's partiality continued.

On Monday, January 9, 1753, Mr. Smith made his firſt *entrée* in the character of Theodoſius, or the Force of Love—Varanes, Barry; Athenaïs, Mrs. Cibber: it was repeated the Tueſday, Wed-

neſday and Thurſday following. Mr. Smith's firſt benefit was on Saturday, April 7, 1753, the Siege of Damaſcus.

When the drum beat for marching orders to the camp at Harrow, I feigned ſickneſs very well; and by continuing at home I was at the height of bliſs. Mr. and Mrs. Reeves were, on account of their civilities to me at Harrow, conſtant viſitors at my father's during the receſs. Mr. Wier, gentleman to Sir Francis Delaval, was ſmitten with my friend Mrs. Reeves's ſiſter, *the Laſs of the Hill*; and Dr. Wilkinſon was appointed to perform the holy rites.—I was father on the occaſion, and gave her away.—I remember it was a cheerful evening with us all; and a genteel ſupper was ordered by Sir Francis Delaval, and ſo ended the marriage with the uſual ceremony.

My attention to the ſtage was truly unremitting—it was my day—my life;—and it is not to be wondered at that my imitations, when really produced on the ſtage, were thought ſuperior to Mr. Garrick's or Mr. Foote's: For thoſe particular actors and actreſſes, whoſe manner and voice I ſo ſtrongly preſented to the public, were taken on the trueſt ground, that of feeling myſelf at the time the perſon I imitated, and not exaggerated into buffoonery;—and this was my work, my toil, my conſtant practice for ſome years before I played in

London. My mode was, that as ideal manager, I appointed myſelf to act Lord Townly. Now, except Lady Townly, Lady Grace, and Mr. Manly (for I played all the parts) had each a different voice and manner, it did not pleaſe the buildings of my fancy unleſs that I had performers ſuppoſed to be under my command, as thus:

Lord Townly, as Mr. Barry. Going out ſo ſoon after dinner Madam?

Lady Townly, as Mrs. Woffington. Lard! my Lord, what can I poſſibly do at home?

Manly, as Mr. Sparks. Yes, Madam, in rather turning myſelf out of doors than her.

Lady Grace, as Mrs. Elmy. Don't you think that would be going too far?

Manly as Mr. Sparks. I don't know but it might, Madam—for in ſtrict juſtice I think ſhe ought rather to go than I, &c.

A ſtranger on thoſe occaſions to have been at the door would have thought that four or five perſons were gathered together, and were rehearſing a play. I had ſo habituated myſelf to this fluctuation of voice, and to move and change my features to thoſe of the actors and actreſſes I judged myſelf perſonating, that from impulſive enthuſiaſm, (for I cannot think of another word) I felt, as if each individual I ſpoke and acted like were at that inſtant under the reſtrictions and re-

verence due to a real audience of the moſt collected and faſhionable conſequence; and

My fiction and dream of paſſion
Did work my ſoul up to its own conceit,
That from its fancy all my viſage warm'd
My whole function ſuiting
With forms to my conceit.

When this thought is ſupported by an applauding audience, it becomes more truly reliſhed than an auditor or reader can ſuppoſe: For the beſt actor that ever trode the ſtage, as Betterton, Booth, Wilks, Cibber, Quin, Garrick, Barry, or Kemble, if not ſupported by encouragement, would ſtill have remained himſelf—*not* the character he repreſented, unleſs happily thrown off his guard by the ſmiles and applauſe of the public; which beſtowed, "On ſilken wings ſublime he cuts the air," and is in reality the monarch he then repreſents. The ſame aid, the ſame comfort, makes the comedian, as well as the tragedian, but not in ſo great a degree, as circumſtances differ widely—a ſmile only will cheer a drooping comedian, but the ſame ſmile is immediate death to the tragic hero.

At the end of the ſeaſon, May 1753, Mrs. Cibber left Covent-Garden, and Barry loſt his Juliet, but ſoon provided himſelf another—A Miſs Noſſiter made her firſt appearance in that character, on Wedneſday the 10th of October.

Miſs Bellamy returned to Covent-Garden; but her firſt appearance was very different from what ſhe relates in her memoirs.

I will put a ſtop for the preſent to Theatrical Anecdotes, as well as of my family and ſelf and muſt here intreat leave to introduce a little hiſtory of

LADY CORNWALLIS'S FATHER

a year before its real date, that it may not intervene too much with that part of my life, which on reflection, from that hour to my laſt, will be truly intereſting to my feelings; and I doubt not, but it will claim and obtain the tear of pity. Amongſt the variety of our acquaintance and viſitors, my mother's moſt conſtant intimate was a Mrs. Jones, wife of Captain James Jones, of his Majeſty's third regiment of guards, who lived in the houſe allotted for the ſuperintendant officer in the Savoy-Square, and not above two hundred yards from our dwelling. As a private family hiſtory, this tale might be thought intruding, tireſome, and impertinent; but when I announce Capt. James Jones as the father of the *late Lady Cornwallis*, I hope I ſhall be permitted to proceed, and be honoured with attention; nor will his Lordſhip, I truſt, be offended with any matter I ſhall here inſert; for I pronounce that it is the pen of Truth which writes this relation of all my various and hiſtorical

events, and I would rather burn the book than let it be ſtained with ſlander. What I here reſpectfully, and with diffidence relate, I aſſure myſelf his Lordſhip will not—cannot be offended at, but the contrary——

> Curſt be the lines, howe'er ſo well they flow,
> If they but make one ſingle man my foe.

At the time I give this ſhort detail of change and chances in Life's fickle dance, I muſt notice I have been for many years thrown ſo diſtant from my ancient friends and patrons, and my viſits of late, when in London, were ſo limited that I know not whether Mrs. Jones (mother-in-law to Lord Cornwallis) is living or dead. However if that good Lady is now in our earthly region, I take the liberty to mention that the material part, ſuch as the grand change in Captain Jones's latter fortune, I had from her own lips, or rather my mother was honoured with the relation.

Captain Jones was of a moſt accompliſhed turn of mind, to which was added every requiſite to conſtitute the true gentleman—a ſtrong underſtanding, wit, vivacity, and generoſity; his perſon well made, ſmart, elegant, but not handſome. I cannot aſcertain Capt. Jones and his Lady's mode and manners better than by referring the reader to Fielding's "Capt. Booth and his Amelia."

I could ſuppoſe Mrs. Jones the Amelia in every reſpect, and have my doubts whether Fielding did not take exact meaſure, and actually founded that novel on his knowledge of thoſe two perſons—Nay, I could almoſt ſwear it, for I never can believe that Captain Jones and his Lady would have been ſo very complaiſant as to have ſtudied their very foibles, and ruſh into ſcenes of diſtreſs, merely to imitate characters drawn by a noveliſt.

To theſe worthy perſons the world was obliged for a ſon and daughter.—The ſon, Mr. James Jones, is ſtill living near Whitehaven, his eſtate being in that part of the kingdom: Miſs Jones, the daughter, was, when a child, of a remarkably quick genius, and poſſeſſed a theatrical turn; at eight years old could repeat all the ſpeeches of Juliet with the utmoſt preciſion, and her father's judgment and attention made her quite correct. But Dame Fortune will have her frolics, and like a naughty woman, makes no ſcruple of introducing her daughter, *Miſs*, on every occaſion—Nay, ſo abandoned is ſhe, that ſhe forces her into the worſt as well as the beſt company; and what is truly lamentable, no living mortal will ever hear of her death, for the wicked jade will live and triumph, while the world is a world; and ſhe too often from her whims, by being an univerſal

plague, obliged Captain Jones to make the verge of the Court his moſt frequented walks—and of courſe, being often weary in body and mind in ſuch walks of recreation and the reflections on this noon lounge, he would frequently ſit down in a reverie on one of the benches in St. James's Park. Mrs. Chance (not her daughter) met him one morning, and ſuggeſted his reſting himſelf on the ſame bench with General Skelton, who was then an entire ſtranger to him, of an ill tempered moroſe turn, like old Rueful in the Natural Son. This happened often, and by theſe interviews and chit chat they of courſe became mutually acquainted as Park-frequenters, to create an appetite for dinner, but no more; for the General never once aſked him to his houſe, or formed any further intercourſe. In the variety of ups and downs which Capt. Jones's ſpirit and humour occaſioned, that hydra-headed monſter Gaming, the origin of moſt human ills, precipitately urged him to the brink of ruin. His affairs grew ſo embarraſſed, that he found it neceſſary to have a ſecret retirement, about eight miles from the metropolis, near Mortlake upon the Thames; and by art and diſguiſe he found means to ſee his family: Some time elapſed, when after a long abſence he was obliged to appear at St. James's;—being in a hurry to reach that place of royal protection, fearing

every inſtant a rude fiſted bailiff, he was poſting with the eyes of Argus to get within the ſacred verge, when he was ſuddenly called on by an audible voice, which he took to be that of an acquaintance. He did not wiſh to be near, therefore made the beſt of his way, the other continuing in full ſpeed after our Captain; fear did not add wings on this occaſion, for he looked on this fatal demon as one that would ſo far prove a devil, as to plunge him into ruin and irretrieveable diſtreſs. Finding it impoſſible to gain the wiſhed for aſylum, he determined to face his enemy, and wheeled about as in a poſture of defence.—This ſhort pauſe ſoon brought the parties to a ſtate of parley. Jones, on looking ſtedfaſtly on his ſuppoſed enemy, knew him to be a gentleman of the law and of reputation, therefore ſaid, "What is the reaſon, Sir, you hazard my reſentment, by treating me in this rude and contemptible manner?"—"Why," ſays the lawyer, "damn it, Jemmy! what are you afraid of?—I am Mr. Brown the attorney, and have had the pleaſure of knowing you for ſome time."——"True," ſaid the Captain, "but you are not at preſent one of the moſt pleaſant acquaintance I could wiſh to meet in my preſent circumſtances."

Mr. Brown. "Dear Jones, you never were in a greater error, for before we part I will make

you confeſs I am not only equal, but ſuperior to any friend you ever had in your life."

Captain Jones. "Indeed!"

Mr. Brown. "I will prove my aſſertion; therefore without apprehenſion or ſurpriſe let you and I adjourn to the next tavern, and the myſtery ſhall be made perfectly clear."

The reader cannot doubt but on this mixture of alarm, doubt, fear, and apprehenſion, Jones's heart beat as quickly from curioſity as it had within a ſhort ſpace done with fear: In ſilence they entered the firſt houſe of public invitation that offered;—having procured a room, &c. after three or four hems, ſtirring the fire, and the lawyer gueſſing at the other's eagerneſs, he for once in his life omitted the law's delay, and proceeded to buſineſs.

Brown. "My dear Sir, to eaſe your ſuſpenſe and bring the extraordinary cauſe of our meeting to that concluſion which tends to promote the ſucceſs and happineſs of your life, there is an unknown friend, anxious for your proſperity and for the welfare of your worthy wife and family; therefore let me know the amount that will make your affairs eaſy, and I have authority to aſſure you it ſhall be immediately done."

Jones. "I declare, Sir,—*(here his features brightened)*—it is a ſurpriſing as well as unexpected

propoſal; but as I have dipt into fatal debts of honour, which I cannot as a gentleman ſcreen, I fear when they are known, I ſhall forfeit all the noble intentions of my concealed patron."

Brown. "Fear not even that, for your patron's ſcrutinizing eye has made him well acquainted with every part of your miſconduct, as well as your nobler and deſerving qualities, and the latter in his judgment weighs ſo much ſuperior, as to kick the beam with your errors; and I feel the happineſs at this inſtant to have it in my power to convince you that you may be free from all terror or inconvenience during life."

Jones. "Good God! who can this paragon of friendſhip be!—or am I in a dream!"

Brown. Term it a dream;—and though a very pleaſing one, you ſhall wake to the reality.—— But now let me inform you—that General Skelton has done you this favour."

Jones. "General Skelton!—Why, except my chance meetings and converſations in the Park, I have little or no acquaintance with him."

Brown. "However it is true."

Jones. "Let me fly this inſtant to the General, to expreſs my rapture, acknowledgments, and gratitude!"

Brown. Not ſo faſt, Captain;—the General will never ſpeak to you again."

Jones. "Good God! this is more incomprehenſible than all the reſt."

Brown. "Not at all ſtrange, as he died laſt night."

Jones. "Laſt night! It is a romance!—an Arabian tale!"

Brown. "Ay, or a Mother Shipton's prophecy; and it needs not only your credibility, but more—all the fortitude, reaſon, and philoſophy you can ſummon to your aid, for you muſt of neceſſity comply with, not a requeſt only, but a demand."

Jones. "I hope, after this act of unexpected generoſity, no tie is annexed to expect any compliance that may be a diſgrace, and oblige me to refuſe the benevolence he has honoured me with?"

Brown. "Of that you muſt be the judge; and to be plain, he had taken a great diſlike to the name of Jones, and has ordered you to change it."

Jones. "If that be all, I will conſent to be called any name he may have pleaſed to appoint, or that may have ſtruck his fancy—but as Jones is my real name I muſt be obliged in all tranſactions to retain it ſtill."

Brown. "Even that may be ſettled without difficulty, as acts of parliament can remove greater obſtacles; and as you have borne the firſt ſurpriſe like a ſoldier, know, my dear friend, I made his will, and have for ſome time known the General's ſecret intentions and with ſincere pleaſure con-

gratulate you on being truly and *bona fide*, left ſole heir to all his ample poſſeſſions, only in return (as he had not a ſon) that you by authority reſign the name of Jones for Skelton."

Here the joy, the rapture of our captain may be imagined much eaſier than expreſſed, yet what follows will too fully prove how tranſitory are all human events, and the extraordinary fact plead, with the feeling heart, a ſufficient excuſe for my inſertion of it.

Jones immediately, with his good genius the honeſt attorney, haſtened to Mrs. Jones, and after the forms of neceſſary preparation informed her of the glad tidings.—The fortunate Captain and his Lady went with Brown to view the New Palace in Henrietta Street; from which place her impatience made her elope to ſee her friend Mrs. Wilkinſon in Little Bedford-Street, to inform her of theſe wonderful and delightful particulars.

Miſs Chudleigh, (the late Ducheſs of Kingſton) at that time a toaſt in the faſhionable circles, and who abſolutely appeared as a naked Venus at a maſquerade given ſome years ſince at Somerſet-houſe, was a near relation of General Skelton's: Being apprized of his death, ſhe immediately ordered her carriage, and entered the houſe—ſecure in her ſanguine expectations that not only part, but the whole of his eſtates were left at her will and diſpoſal. When the time came for the u-

ſual form of opening the will, and Jones was pronounced ſole executor, the diſappointment of Miſs Chudleigh burſt out in terms exceeding all bounds of delicacy—Her rage was exceſſive—(and indeed few would be found who would rejoice at the good fortune of another when oppoſed to their own loſs of election; in ſhort, unleſs being too violent from extreme of paſſion, her feelings muſt be allowed as the reſult of Nature)—ſhe ironically declared the General was an old fool, and in his dotage; and that Jones and his wife were impudent, low upſtarts, beneath her notice,—returned to her coach with a ſcornful quality toſs, and was drove furiouſly home to ſigh, fume, and fret at leiſure.—This was the exit of that ambitious, haughty dame.

Here with pleaſure we behold, after the ſtorms of adverſity, a ſerene ſky, and this accompliſhed amiable couple ſurrounded with every proſpect of unbounded happineſs; and promiſed addition of joys, even as their days did grow, with a ſon and daughter poſſeſſed of every endowment to make their mutual felicity complete.

The houſe in Henrietta-Street, (after the ſolemn and reſpectful interment of General Skelton) was ſoon new decked; they remained there till the ſummer had made ſome approach, it was then judged neceſſary on account of buſineſs, pleaſure, and inclination, to viſit his eſtates, left by the

General, in Cumberland. The ſon was at ſchool, and the Captain, his Lady, and daughter, ſet off with that kind of ſelf-ſatisfaction, which ſuch a journey would naturally inſpire; they ſafely arrived, and for about three weeks ſeemed not only in an enchanted ſpot, but a paradiſe; and, O delightful! that paradiſe their own. Unfortunately the Captain wilfully, and againſt the perſuaſion of his friends, would be let down to view a lead-mine, from which indeed he did return, but was inſtantaneouſly ſeized with a diſorder of the moſt malignant and fatal kind, which in a few days baffled all ſkill, and he died in the arms of as ſenſible and endearing a wife as ever bleſſed a huſband, or honoured the world. Her feelings on this occaſion were poignant indeed; but by degrees her ſtrength of mind roſe ſuperior to her grief—her loſs was great and irrevocable! Fate had ſigned the warrant, and the dreadful ſtroke had been ſuſtained. She curbed the ſudden throbs and impulſe of her heart—Nature had claimed her rights, and ſhe had been obeyed. Mrs. Jones reflected, that though ſhe had loſt her huſband, her protector; yet not many months before had this melancholy event happened in her book of fate, ſhe had been left deſtitute, without friends, or means of ſupport; and that a ſon and daughter, who would now attain rank and affluence, would then have been obliged to ſubmit for their

exiſtence to means below their birth, talents, and education.

Mrs. Jones's firſt cares were employed in the further improvement of her daughter's education, adding every accompliſhment of art, to thoſe bleſſings Nature had beſtowed, with a profuſe and bountiful hand on her darling child; a few years completed the pleaſing taſk, when the mother introduced her bewitching and attractive daughter under her matron wing into the more elegant and poliſhed ſcenes of life. Mrs. Jones was of a moſt lively and entertaining diſpoſition; when once more returned to mix with the world, ſhe was willingly viſited by the gay, the good, and the great: amongſt her round of acquaintance was the brave, the preſent Lord Cornwallis. He ſoon felt an impreſſion not to be effaced, by the frequent converſations he had the happineſs to enjoy with the lovely Miſs Jones; nor was the young Lady leſs pleaſed with the great attention his Lordſhip honoured her with. His Lordſhip made propoſals, which the mother's good ſenſe approved, and her daughter's inclination and duty obeyed. Their ſouls were congenial——

> And to his valour and his valiant parts,
> Did ſhe her ſoul and body conſecrate.

The match ſoon took place to the joy and credit of all parties. Never did wedded felicity promiſe more laſting happineſs——

One day past by, and nothing saw but love;
Another came, and still 'twas only love:
The suns were wearied out with looking on,
And he untired with loving.
He saw her ev'ry day, and all the day;
And ev'ry day was still but as the first,
So eager was he still to see her more.

When lo! the dreadful, the unfortunate war with America appeared! and to her Ladyship indeed a view of horror. His Lordship, though all the lover and affectionate husband, would not suffer his honour to forget that he was a soldier, and eager to hazard blood and life for his king and country, he entreated not to be an idle spectator in the time of danger, if his services could be rendered acceptable, which was immediately granted; and his Majesty conferred particular command and honors on his Lordship—whose regiment was ordered into immediate service. Lady Cornwallis, struck deep with grief, urged every plea that affection, reason, intreaty, and endearment, could suggest to win his Lordship from his purpose; but there he proved inexorable—he was indeed a Hector, but she could not sustain the difficult firmness of an Andromache. She even ventured to try her influence over an high personage, a near relation of his Lordship's*, who moved with her heart-felt affliction, begged her to be comforted, with every assurance to accomplish if practicable,

* The A—b—p of C—t—rb—y.

Lord Cornwallis's continued reſidence in England. This exalted perſon waited on the King, and painted her Ladyſhip's agony in ſuch terms, that his Majeſty could not refuſe a requeſt to ſuch an inconteſtible proof of connubial love, and relinquiſhed his intentions of Lord Cornwallis's going to America. Her Ladyſhip now felt ſecure of all her wiſhes; but how vain, how unſubſtantial is human bliſs!—for the inſtant he heard an item of what was done, and the ſource from whence it ſprung, he flew like lightning to the throne, judged his honor, duty, was at ſtake, and his fame would be for ever tarniſhed, ſhould he ſuffer ſuch a weak womaniſh motive, (however affectionate) to over balance ſuperior duty. His Majeſty was convinced of the propriety and nobleneſs of his ſentiments, and therefore his command was continued—to America he went.—As to the hour of ſeperation, turn your light inward—eye, behold, and picture!——he relied on her Ladyſhip's ſtrength of mind and pride for his honour to reconcile her poignancy of ſorrow.

But love, almighty love, reigned in her diſtracted boſom!——With horror ſhe ſunk beneath the weight of grief!—her eager heart followed her other ſelf—o'er leaped its bounds—and, beckoned by the attending ſpirit, her ſoul departed to the angels ſure, and left her precious image deeply engraven in his Lordſhip's heart!

Here let me pauſe, and with truth declare, I could not relate this tragical event of the lady, by me ſo well remembered, without paying the tribute of a tear to her lovely and virtuous memory. Here ariſes an awful and an uſeful leſſon for reflection, as it evinces that no rank whatever is exempt from misfortunes—The gilded carriage too often carries a heavy mind within.—Where we have feared death, we have borne life away! and where we would be ſafe, *we periſh!*

Since I wrote the foregoing hiſtory, I have been honoured with a letter from James Jones Skelton, Eſq; of Pap Caſtle, near Cockermouth, in Cumberland, ſon to the Capt. Jones before mentioned.—I conjecture Pap Caſtle to have been the ſeat of good old General Skelton.

The ſeaſon at Covent-Garden in 1753, cloſed on Saturday, May the 26th, with Romeo and Juliet; the laſt time Mrs. Cibber ever performed with her firſt Romeo, Mr. Barry, as ſhe engaged at Drury Lane the ſeaſon following: When Mr. Barry tutored and introduced Miſs Noſſiter, Wedneſday, Oct. 10th, as before mentioned, in the character of Juliet, to the public, ſhe was moſt favourably received. His occaſional prologue that night contained the following compliment to Mrs. Cibber:

" Who cou'd have thought that Juliet e'er cou'd prove,
" Falſe to her Romeo, faithleſs to her love;

"She on whoſe voice the enraptur'd audience hung,
"Caught by th' angelic muſic of her tongue."

That ſeaſon produced an ornament of private and public worth, Mrs. Gregory (now Fitzhenry): She firſt appeared on the 19th of January 1754, in the Princeſs Hermione; which character ſhe repeated ſeveral nights. Miſs Bellamy, alſo returned that year from Drury-Lane, and made her *debut* in Athenaïs.—In that Winter was the famous Dublin Riot. Saturday, February 2, 1754, Mr. Sheridan was dethroned. Mr. Barry, with Miſs Noſſiter, and Mrs. Gregory went to Ireland, in October, 1754.—Mr. Murphy acted Othello, Friday, October 18, 1754, at Covent-Garden, being his firſt appearance on any ſtage. Mrs. Woffington, and Mr. Sheridan were alſo engaged from Ireland, at Covent-Garden.——Mr. Sheridan retired in the Spring, and Barry returned to his old ſituation at that theatre, and continued there till the end of May, 1758.—Mr. Murphy deſerted to Drury-Lane in 1755.—Mr. Moſſop went that ſeaſon to Ireland. Mr. Holland became a candidate for public favour, October 13, the ſame year; and the great riot, on account of the French Dancers, was on Saturday the 8th of November, 1755. The bill from the peculiar circumſtances which it occaſioned I here inſert.

By His MAJESTY's COMMAND.

THEATRE-ROYAL, *in Drury-Lane.*

This preſent Saturday, being the 8th of November, 1755, will be preſented a Comedy, called

The Fair Quaker of Deal.

Beau Mizen, by Mr. WOODWARD.
Commodore Flip, by Mr. YATES.
Arabella Zeal, by Miſs MACKLIN.
Belinda, by Miſs HAUGHTON.
The Fair Quaker, by Mrs. DAVIES.

To which will be added, a New Grand Entertainment of DANCING, called

THE CHINESE FESTIVAL.

Compoſed by Mr. NOVERRE.

The Characters by

Monſ. DELAISTRE,
Sig. BALETTI, Mr. LAUCHERY,

Mr. Neverre, jun.	Mr. Shawforth,	Monſ. L. Clerk,	Mr. Hunt,
Mr. Dinniſon,	Mr. Mathews,	Mr. Harriſon,	Monſ. Sarney,
Monſ. St. Leger.	Monſ. Pochee,	Mr. Granier,	Mr. Walker,

Mrs. VERNON, Miſs NOVERRE,

Mr. Morris,	Mr. Ackman,	Mrs. Noverre,	Mrs. Preſton
Mr. Booker,	Mr. Walker,	Mrs. Gibbons,	Mad. Nonend,
Mr. Sturt,	Sig. Pietro,	Mad. Charon,	Mrs. Phillips,
Mr. Atkins,	Mrs. Addiſon	Mad. Nouſſelet,	Mrs. Lawſon,

Little PEITRO, Miſs NOVERRE,

Maſter Simpſon,	Maſter Hurſt,	Miſs Popling,
Maſter Pope,	Maſter Spillbury,	Miſs Simſon,
Maſter Blagden,	Miſs Bride,	Miſs Heath,

Mr. Seraſe,	Mr. Mare,	Mr. Clough,	Mrs. Hippiſley,
Mr. Ackman,	Mr. Vaughan,	Mr. Aiken,	Mrs. Matthews,
Mr. Jefferſon,	Mr. Chamneſs,	Mr. Gray,	Mrs. Simſon,
Mr. Burton,	Mr. Bullrick,	Mrs. Bradſhaw,	And Miſs Mills.

With New Muſic, Scenes, Machines, Habits, and other Decorations.

Boxes, 5s.—Pit, 3s.—Firſt Gal. 2s.—Upper Gal. 1s.

PLACES for the Boxes to be taken of Mr. VARNEY, at the Stage-door of the THEATRE.

No perſon can poſſibly be admitted behind the Scenes, or into the Orcheſtra.

Nothing under full price will be taken during the whole Performance.

In 1756 Mr. Sheridan reſumed his throne, after an abdication of two years, and continued till the end of the ſeaſon, June, 1758.

Theſe little anecdotes of the theatres I have merely given a place, to fill up the chaſm of my life from Chriſtmas 1752; nor would I have offered theſe notes here, as I intend a regular account of the ſucceſs of every performer, their ſeaſons, &c. in a publication that will not only contain much information, but be of real ſervice to every young candidate for the ſock or buſkin, whether lady or gentleman, with the terms, advantages, and diſadvantages, of all the principal play-houſes, and circuits in the three kingdoms, and the particulars of my own theatres, from my commencing manager to the preſent date; but without any idea of another ſubſcription: therefore this little ſketch is only done by way of ſupply for my fameneſs of life till November 1756, being entirely at home.

In 1755, my father began the dreadful experiment of exerting his ſuppoſed rights as miniſter of the Savoy; and my conſtant attendance at the theatres was aided by a pocket full of money; for ſoon after the *fatal* Marriage Act (as I may *truly* term it) took place; my father judged he had a right to grant licences as uſual; and that it was a privilege annexed to the Savoy, as being extra-parochial. Thoſe marriages brought in a

profuſion of caſh,—and inſtead of thinking of a rainy day, all was *rat*, *tat*, *tat*, at the ſtreet-door, and a variety of company.—Mr. Fox's popularity was then arrived at ſuch an height, from the oppoſition he made to the Marriage Act, that his chariot was dragged along the ſtreets by the populace for ſeveral days together—I have known as much crowding to hear my father preach a condemned ſermon, as to get admittance on a faſhionable night into a theatre.

The famous Doctor Killigrew, who had been many years miniſter of the Savoy, and all my father's predeceſſors had ever retained the power and right of granting licences for marrying from their own authority; and being extra-parochial, my father judged himſelf ſecure, and not within the reach of that ſevere act. The temple of Hymen being ſo ſeaſonably opened for the relief of diſtreſſed lovers, marriage begot marriage;—Eaſter Day was crowded from eight till twelve—So many pairs were for the indiſſoluble knot being tied, that he might have made a fortune had he been bleſſed with patience and prudence, and been contented with publiſhing the bans of marriage only. Many perſons came on a Sunday out of curioſity to hear ſuch a long liſt of ſpinſters announced; all females of ſpirit engaging for the public good. The Pariſian dames were not leſs

fearleſs on their late march to Verſailles. Had he ſtuck to the bans only, he had puzzled the miniſter who framed the act.

And—"Wiſely and ſlow; they ſtumble that run faſt," might have been my father's motto. Debts, that had been the plague of our houſe were now almoſt unknown; and I muſt ſay in juſtice to Government, from my own knowledge, he had hints of the terrible conſequences that would certainly enſue, and they wiſhed him to drop a practice that muſt inevitably end in unavoidable ruin; he ſuppoſed thoſe hints proceeded from their fears of his undoubted right, and that was the real cauſe of their lenity, without keeping in mind, that had it been ſo,——"Might will overcome Right."——So it proved, for the laws were put into immediate execution.

There was then, and I ſuppoſe there is ſtill, a regular walk over the leads at the Savoy, through the kitchen of the priſon to a private door into the chapel, where the condemned deſerters were taken to hear ſervice the Sunday before they were to be ſhot; and that road he took for the purpoſe of evading the King's meſſengers, ſuppoſed to be at times on the watch. One fatal Sunday morning a ſudden alarm came that the officers were in the church.—A general panic enſued in our little family—My father ſent word he was ſuddenly taken

ill—nay, actually wanted me to read prayers in the clerk's desk; and fearing that a forcible attack would be made on our territories, from the the said gentlemen not meeting him in the church, he went down the garden to a gate that opened on the banks of the Thames; the tide happened to be low—his person unluckily was weighty, and he was aged about fifty-four—the steps were old—his foot slipped, and he fell very heavily against some logs of wood, such as are frequently seen floating on that river. He recovered himself, and kept close to the shore, which was very muddy and not public, till he got to Somerset-stairs, and there he immediately took a boat, and by one manœuvre or another got into Kent. For had he been seized, he must not only have suffered immediate confinement, but our marriage temple would inevitably have been at an end; therefore, in Kent he engaged one Mr. Grierson, a clergyman, to perform the marriages, as his curate; but the licences he granted himself, thinking that Mr. Grierson could not suffer for what he in his authority, as minister of the Savoy, was to be responsible for; but he was again in error. I must here take occasion to observe, that those marriages were not privately conducted as through fear, but quite the contrary; for my father publickly advertised his authority for so doing.

Mr. Vernon, of Drury-Lane Theatre, was at that time married by Mr. Grierſon, to Miſs Poitier of the ſame ſtage, and this circumſtance has occaſioned a thouſand ill founded ſtories.—We all know, ſtories beget ſtories; but then we *make 'em*, and *when made* we *tell 'em*.

Mr. Vernon was baniſhed the ſtage by the audience in London as an informer, in September 1756. The fact was ſimply this—Mr. David Garrick ever loved to be meddling; and though the Marriage Act concerned him not half ſo much as—whether the Emperor of Morocco's Sultana was the daughter of an Iriſh oyſter woman or not;—yet ſtill he would be buſy.—Mr. George Garrick, attorney at law, his brother, had wedded a daughter of Mr. Carrington's, the King's meſſenger, and lived at Somerſet Houſe; on hearing of Mr. Vernon's being married, he (Mr. George Garrick) judged it a glorious opportunity to prove his vigilance, and Mr. Carrington's diligence in the ſervice of Government; therefore they ſummoned Mr. Vernon to appear, and to give King David a ſatisfactory account of his marriage, as to the where and the when. For as to the tale of Vernon's being immediately after marriage tired of his Lady, it is merely a fictitious ſtory.

> Conſent if mutual, ſaves the lawyer's fee,
> Conſent is law enough to ſet you free.——

Infidelity was ſo demonſtrative on both ſides, that the archbiſhop's licence would have had very little force in tying faſter the marriage nooſe.—The lady liked a variety of huſbands, and the gentleman a plurality of wives. They frequently changed their mates, till at laſt in Dublin, he became acquainted with Miſs Macartney, who was well-bred, ſenſible, and handſome. She fixed the rambling rover, and with that amiable woman he lived happily, till death robbed the public of one, at leaſt, of the moſt pleaſing ſingers the ſtage or Vauxhall could ever boaſt of.—He had a great advantage added to his taſte and expreſſion as a ſinger, as he poſſeſſed (what ſeldom accompanies vocal performers) ſtrong abilities as an actor, which, aided by a pleaſing perſon gave united force to his performances on every occaſion. Mr. Vernon's aſſertion as to his being really married at the Savoy to Miſs Poitier, Mr. David Garrick affected not to believe; but aſked, who married them—if it was Doctor Wilkinſon? Mr. Vernon, replied, "No,—the clergyman's name was Grierſon."—Mr. David Garrick ſtill ſeemed not convinced, but inſiſted on ſeeing the certificate, which Mr. Vernon immediately obtained from Mr. Grierſon, and gave it to Mr. David Garrick, who delivered it to Mr. Carrington; and Mr. Grierſon was, in conſequence, for-

ced out of his lodgings in open day, and committed to Newgate, tried, and condemned to tranſportation for fourteen years.—Mr. Vernon was ſubpœned to the trial, and was obliged to appear when called on. Mr. Grierſon had a large family in great want of ſubſiſtence—had no living, and nothing but the name of a poor clergyman for his ſupport. In circumſtances ſo deſperate, he was glad to lay hold of any decent means for their ſupport; and if the worſt came to the worſt, and the law ſhould make a clergyman's joining people in wedlock a crime, which for ages had been a ceremony held in the firſt eſtimation in the minds of men, why he would reconcile himſelf to the conſequence, well knowing that whatever land he ſhould be thrown upon it could not be worſe than this. After he was ſentenced a ſubſcription was raiſed; but I have been informed he died on the voyage—his family were with him; but my knowledge of him was ſo trifling, never having ſeen him except in thoſe few months, that he was engaged as the marrying clergyman at the Savoy, that it is not likely I ſhould be fully acquainted with particulars relative to that unfortunate clergyman.

My father in the intervening ſpace, ſupplied by Grierſon, had ſo arranged his matters, as in his opinion would carry all before the wind; it

was not four weeks before he returned home. Mr. Brooks was his attorney, and the Reverend Mr. Brooks, brother to the attorney, who lately died at Norwich, was my father's curate for the public duties of the church. He was husband to Mrs. Brooks the authoress who favoured the world with *Rosina*, *Marian*, &c. A perpetual round of company went on, but the family strong-purse was waining into a sudden decay with feasting the counsellors and lawyers who were to support his cause; and one and all assured him, over the flowing bowl, that victory was certain—but the event of war no mortal knows. Mr. Brooks being my father's officiate, an acquaintance with his family naturally occurred. Mrs. Brooks was his second wife—her mind was good, but her person much the contrary—she then had a literary turn, and her agreeable, sensible remarks, observations, and instructions, were given with affability, and proved to me of great advantage.

At her house I frequently met with Mr. Quin, who was using his interest with Mr. Rich to produce Mrs. Brooks's Tragedy of Virginia, which was very properly rejected, as it was not only a very poor play, but one on the same subject, by Crofts at Drury-Lane, and another by Moncrief at Covent-Garden, had been performed in 1753

and 1754, and neither of them attended with ſucceſs; but Crofts's was by much the beſt.

Mrs. Woffington and Mrs. Elmy were alſo her viſitors. Mrs. Elmy knowing my inclination for the ſtage, corrected many of my faults; her underſtanding was allowed by all to be very extenſive. She is ſtill living, and now muſt be greatly in the vale of years; and I beg leave to aſſure her, that whereſoever ſhe dwells, I have not forgot her leſſons on pronunciation, manners, and characters. Nor can her merit in Octavia, Lady Grace, or Mrs. Marwood, be ever erazed from my mind. Mrs. Cholmondley, ſiſter to Mrs. Woffington, was often there; but hearing I had dared at that time to imitate Mrs. Woffington, Mrs. Brooks never had influence to get me into any degree of favour with either of thoſe ladies. I twice or thrice viſited Mrs. Woffington, in York-buildings, with Dr. and Mrs. Brooks, but it was a forced civility in compliance to them.

Mrs. Woffington had conceived a diſguſt not to be removed, and it was rooted even to hatred, as will hereafter appear. It muſt be obſerved, that thirty years ago, mimicking of the performers had not been attempted at the theatres, except by Mr. Garrick, and that when he was at Goodman's Fields, and by Mr. Foote at the Hay-Market. For

when Mr. Foote acted at Covent-Garden, he left out that part of his performance, and the Hay-Market was the ſpot for him to be the hero of each tale, and where he ſhone in a conſpicuous light to every advantage. His mimickry at Covent-Garden, conſiſted of a whimſical teaching of ſtage pupils, the Puppets—the Chevalier Taylor and a Doctor Heberden, two very public characters, and well known by every body.

I was the firſt that ever gave an entertainment of that kind at Drury-Lane or Covent-Garden Theatres; ſince which, it has been ſo often well and ill attempted, that though the actors and actreſſes naturally do not approve of the practice, nor admire the talents of ſuch an exhibitor, yet it does not by any means create the ſpleen and unhappineſs it did formerly; for the frequent exertion of ſuch comic powers certainly have taken off that edge, which thirty years ago was judged moſt cutting, and not to be endured. The peculiarities of Mr. Delane, an actor of the firſt rank, were ſo ſeverely pointed out by Mr. Garrick, in the character of Bayes, that it is ſaid to have actually occaſioned Mr. Delane's flying to the bottle for relief to his hurt mind; he continued to uſe it with ſuch exceſs that he never was himſelf again.

In other men we faults can ſpy,
And blame the mote that dims their eye;

Each little ſpeck and blemiſh find,
To our own ſtronger errors blind."

Mr. Delane is mentioned as a gentleman of family in Ireland, of liberal education, and great qualifications for the ſtage.

Mr. Garrick at the ſollicitation of his friends—remonſtrances of the actors, (without whoſe aſſiſtance he could not live, for what avails a general without an army,) and from full conviction his own merit required not ſuch aid as mimickry, as it was merely a trifling feather in his cap of fame; he, for once in his life did a generous action, and gave up what he no longer wanted.

But to return again to my father, who was at home fairing moſt ſumptuouſly every day on the gleanings of the marriage harveſt, but with very little attention or anxiety paid to the evil hour; and I was in my glory, full of feaſting, company, perſonating a hero at night in my own play-houſe, or viſiting one of the theatres, and ſometimes both. If I did reflect, it was very briefly—I argued thus, that if the worſt ſhould happen, I could be a great actor in time, and did not doubt but that I ſhould be a manager in reality——

O glorious thought, I did enjoy it,
Tho' but in fancy:
But after ſunſhine comes a ſtorm.

My father having perſiſted in the purſuit of his

golden vision, and being of an intrepid spirit, and, as he thought, secure of victory on the day of trial. The week previous to it, in July 1756, he visited several of his friends, and on the Sunday evening, attended by two or three of his intimates, took an affectionate leave of my mother and myself, and delivered himself up at Newgate, as he had given notice, that he was ready to abide trial the next sessions, which was to begin on the Monday following; and on the Friday in the same week came on his dreadful day—a dreadful day indeed was it to my disconsolate mother, whose features indicated a mind replete with woe. The trial of my father was not a scene for me to be present at; but I remember to have heard he urged, in his defence, that he, "had been pursued with unrelenting vengeance."

As he was chaplain to his Majesty, had they been determined on no other act of severity, they certainly for his hostile demeanor in defiance of Government, would have taken his place of chaplain from him. However it is too well known, whatever he might think as to his rights and privileges, that the court found him guilty of the offence; and it is as well known, that though the public at large wished him well, and detested the act in force, yet most of his reasonable friends thought he would at last suffer the consequences announced

by law, by which he was ſentenced to fourteen years tranſportation.

This was a ſtroke he moſt ſeverely felt, for it ſtruck at his affections, his pride, and his falſe dependence, which was the moſt mortifying of all: for the condolence of what we ſuffer from conſequent effects and cauſes, clears in ſome degree the rugged paths of Misfortune; but what our own wiſdom fails in, when in oppoſition to the opinion of wiſer heads, makes the diſappointment terribly mortifying—and diſtreſſing indeed!—The general or admiral, who on a great undertaking does not prove victor, however able in judgment and valour, ſeldom or ever eſcapes cenſure. My father therefore fell an unfortunate victim to the memorable Marriage Act. His purſe was drained to the laſt for the purchaſe of being promiſe-crammed by the alluring and flattering hopes given him by the gentlemen of the law.

It now became an act of neceſſity for the public and his friends to be ſtretched to the extent of their humanity, to equip and ſupport him as a gentleman for his voyage to America. His connections were conſiderable, conſequently his recommendations were ſuch, as would doubtleſs have placed him in a light of admiration as a man of the goſpel, had he arrived and lived in that country. His qualifications as a ſcholar, and as

an orator, with the extraordinary law that had occaſioned his removal there, muſt in all probability have made amends for his ſufferings, and have raiſed him to the higheſt eſtimation. It was after ſome conſultation determined, as ſoon as he was well and happily ſituated in America, that my mother and myſelf ſhould go after him.

The following petition, which I now preſent to the reader from his own hand writing, was delivered by my mother herſelf to his Majeſty King George the Second, but without effect or notice. The Secretary of State would not aſſiſt—Petitions were hackneyed then as now, and deemed troubleſome intruſions on the time of a politician.

It is ſeldom the *fortified breaſt-work* of the Miniſter is the friend of Affliction, and where pale Poverty is the ſupplicant, I fear too often his *heart* is callous and proof againſt every attack, that may be attempted by the feeble efforts of Mercy or Charity; therefore to trace entrance there for a needle's point to pierce its feelings is barely poſſible.

TO THE

King's moſt Excellent Majeſty,

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF

JOHN WILKINSON,

MOST HUMBLY SHEWETH,

"THAT ſo long ſince as the year 1725, your "petitioner hath been miniſter of your Majeſty's "royal precinct of the Savoy.

"That your petitioner always apprehending "and believing the Savoy to be a Royal Exempt, "and as ſuch, not ſubject to the ordinary of the "dioceſe, ſo he hath occaſionally, during the time "of his being miniſter of the Savoy, ſolemnized "marriages in the chapel there, by virtue of his "own licences.

"That in the 26th year of your Majeſty's reign "an act was paſſed to prevent clandeſtine mar-"riages; it enacts, "*That if any perſon ſhall ſolem-*"*nize marriages without publication of bans, unleſs* "*licence of marriage be firſt had and obtained* "*from ſome perſon or perſons having authority* "*to grant the ſame, every perſon knowingly and* "*wilfully ſo offending, ſhall be deemed and adjudged* "*to be guilty of felony, and be ſubject to be tranſ-*"*ported for fourteen years.*

" That your Majesty's petitioner from the " hopes that his mistake was not criminal, volun- " tarily surrendered himself to take his trial, upon " a charge of having acted against that statute; " but having been convicted at the last Sessions, " is liable to be transported for the term of four- " teen years, and by this conviction has been de- " prived of that office in the Savoy, and his wife " and family, thereby, now in the utmost distress.

" That your Majesty's petitioner, as he inno- " cently pursued the example of his predecessors, " so from your Majesty's paternal goodness, he " humbly supplicates your Majesty's pardon, to " prevent a clergyman of the church of England, " who for more than thirty years has enjoyed " other preferments in the church, from being ba- " nished his native country, and who has been " universally confessed to be a faithful, loyal, and " useful subject,

" And your Majesty's petitioner,

" as in duty bound shall ever pray,

" JOHN WILKINSON."

The time for his departure was early in March 1757, and the last meeting between father, mother, and son, was, in that most dreadful of all places, Newgate! We who had for so many years moved in a different sphere, and who were more than commonly united—a description of it

muſt here be omitted; but if the ſenſible feeling mind will take a ſhort pauſe, and honour the aſhes of the dead with a moment's reflection, and a tear of pity, it will be only paying a tribute due to humanity and mercy; and from whence ideas will flow in painting the reſult of ſuch a tragical, affecting ſcene, as imagination will eaſily deſcribe much ſtronger than any words can poſſibly expreſs. For Apelles, when he placed his hero in an agony of grief, caſt a mantle over his face, thereby indicating that ſtrong paſſions were more naturally ſupplied from the glow of ideas, than from the pencil of the artiſt, however fine or excellent.

My dear, benevolent, indulgent, gracious, and loving parent, farewell! May your laſt bleſſing procure me, at leaſt, a ſmall portion of your wiſhes for my ſhort remains of life.

My father, with every comfortable neceſſary as a gentleman—all his valuables, clothes, his writings, his bureau, caſh, with recommendatory letters, &c. ſet ſail for America; but was previouſly obliged to pay thirty pounds, as a perquiſite for freedom—a tax on misfortune—as a tribute to the hungry commanders of ſuch veſſels. But it ſeemed as if the Almighty arm had purpoſely interfered, to prevent the diſgrace of any one of his Holy Servants here on earth landing as a baniſh-

ed criminal in a foreign clime, for only performing that ceremony, inſtituted in his Holy Writ, as a ſacred band of unity between thoſe whom inclination had led to his ſacred altar, therein obeying the impulſe of nature, ordained and ſanctified by GOD himſelf.

When they reached the Downs, they could not proceed, the winds would not permit them; from thence we received a letter containing an account of my father being but very indifferent, as the gout had made a ſevere attack in his ſtomach; a complaint with which he was every year more or leſs afflicted in that dangerous ſeat of its reſidence. They were driven by ſtreſs of weather into Plymouth, where his enemy, *the gout*, aſſiſted by the ſeverity of the elements, ſeized this dreadful opportunity to league with Death, and violently aſſaulted a mind and body, already loaded with anguiſh, affection, and affliction, and by finding himſelf bereft of that aſſiſtance and tenderneſs from thoſe he ſighed for, but ſighed in vain!—the mercileſs invaders proved too mighty for his fortitude—the noble cordage cracked and broke! Grim Death ſat triumphant over his conquered manes!

Then my father's ſoul might ſmilingly exult after all his ſufferings here on earth, and as aſcending to his God, rejoicingly cry out "O Death!

where is thy ſting?—O Grave! where is thy victory?

Before the end of this tragical ſtory, I muſt relate that the Captain of the veſſel had my father privately interred at Plymouth, from whence, as fatality ſeemed to pervade the whole myſterious event, on the Captain's returning to his ſhip, his boat was overſet by a rough ſea, the crew were ſaved, but the Captain periſhed.

With one Winter's bruſh
Thus was I left open, bare
For every ſtorm that blow'd.—
Me to bear that—
Who never knew but better—was ſome burthen.

When the Marriage Act took place in 1754, the Duchy of the Savoy certainly was in a lawleſs ſtate, as acts of parliament have paſſed within theſe fifteen years to put it under the power of Government. I recollect ſeveral inſtances—two will explain as well as five hundred. From the Savoy-ſteps in the Strand, on to Duchy-Lane, which is the *laſt* turning before you come to Somerſet-Houſe, down to the water-ſide, and next the water on to Somerſet-ſtairs, (that uſed to be for watermen) is all the Savoy precincts. I remember that a Mr. Wood, a timber-merchant, purchaſed the houſe next door to ours, near the Savoy water-gate, and placed in it one Pugh, who belonged to

Covent-Garden Theatre, to take care of it, but Wood neglecting at the time to put furniture into the premiſes; when he (Wood) wanted his houſe, Pugh not only refuſed, but kept poſſeſſion of it for himſelf, and Wood could not get any remedy at law. The reaſon I do ſuppoſe was, that no original right could be proved by him. Pugh after living in this houſe for ſome years, ſold it to one Meredith, a Welchman; and Taffy well knowing how to turn the penny, even ſtripped the lead off the roof of the houſe, which he afterwards covered with boards, and tarred them over. The lead I believe was the property of Government, for it reached over that, a part of my father's houſe, and ſome of the Savoy priſon.

A man whoſe name was Waller, kept a public houſe near the Savoy-ſquare; he heard of a houſe being empty next the Savoy water-gate, where Mrs. Porter, a celebrated actreſs in Cibber's time had lived. The houſe had been left, and ſtripped of all the furniture.—Breaking a lock was a ſervice of danger; therefore this Waller, who kept the ſuttling-houſe near the barracks, with a ladder fixed againſt it from a lighter, mounted and got in with eaſe at the old balcony, and by the ſame means in the night, conveyed chairs, &c. into the houſe; took off the lock on the inſide, and became ſo dexterous thereby, as to be firmly eſtabliſhed in

the poſſeſſion of it.—For while furniture was in the houſe, and that furniture *his*, the houſe was alſo his property as long as he dwelt in it, or had his goods there—Such was the unruly ſtate of the Savoy.

Waller was ſtill more lucky—for one Burdet, a very rich old German, I dare ſay near eighty years of age, who walked the ſtreets in rags, and was a picture of miſery equal to Otway's Witch, for "his eyes with burning rheum were ſcald and "red, and went about picking up dry ſticks and "mumbling"—would not allow himſelf the neceſſaries of life—was filthy in every ſenſe of the word. This man purchaſed for a very trifling ſum of money this ſame houſe of Waller, and which the old man expected to ſell for a good round ſum, in compariſon to what he had given; but firſt, he had placed in it a broken bedſtead, a chair, &c. More luxuries he needed not, as the cold earth was often his bed, and water his draught of refreſhment.

He had been miſſing for ſeveral days; at laſt Waller was the lucky man to obtain the houſe once more, for, after repeated rappings at the door, he burſt it open, and found this old unaccountable character, this poor, *good*, miſerable, extraordinary being, (for tho' he grudged himſelf food and raiment, yet he had a heart open to another's miſery; I have known him do great acts of kindneſs for my

father) laying dead, and by appearance had been ſo for ſome days, and in all probability for want of common cheer and a little aſſiſtance. Now Waller was ſo lucky by this accident, as again to become the poſſeſſor, and the houſe ſince that time (about 1751) went gradually down from tenant to tenant, according to the Savoy law; and was burnt to the ground the very week before I went to London, in the ſummer 1785.—The houſe above it, which I mentioned before, as having fallen into the hands of one Meredith, ſuffered by the conflagration. All the large ſhops in the Strand, from the Surry ſteps to Somerſet-gate, were all ſold or taken by ſurprize, time out of mind. Any old perſon in that diſtrict will confirm what I relate as the words of truth, though they may ſeem bordering on the marvellous.

The melancholy account of my father's death was ſoon conveyed to us, and was ſubmitted to with reſignation; then to think of means for ſubſiſtence for my afflicted mother and myſelf. No reſtoration of the effects, which my father died poſſeſſed off, could ever be had. As the following lines in a letter ſome time after from my mother, (ſo long as January, 1768) will elucidate—

"Hearing the veſſel was returned from Ame-
"rica—I ſent Mr. Philips, a clerk of your fa-
"ther's, to the Captain of the ſhip, who was

" aſtoniſhed at the demand upon him for effects,
" which he plainly demonſtrated to be left in
" Maryland.—This enquiry coſt me ten ſhillings
" and ſixpence.—All I can now do is to get a let-
" ter conveyed to the merchants abroad to un-
" dertake a reſtitution."

Which application ended in fruitleſs and additional expence.—

Yet in this deſtitute, forlorn, and miſerable ſtate was ſhe left to ſupport and maintain, not only herſelf, but me. It was in the time of the war with France.—Captain Jones immediately offered to procure me a commiſſion in the army—Lord Forbes the ſame; but my own wiſe head led to higher views—no leſs than Monarchy itſelf. In ſhort the ſtage was my throne of adulation; I therefore rejected their offers, which to my mother gave a heart felt pang; as we were really reduced to live by the ſale of ſuch articles of remaining luxury as could produce ſubſiſtence, and which enabled us to continue an appearance fit to be received at thoſe tables we were invited to; and here let me remark, that a Lord may dine in a dingy dreſs, and it is genteel, faſhionable, and elegant; but let the needy man ſet down to table, and a Lord by chance ſhould come into the room, the maſter and miſtreſs of the ceremony do not know how to help or look at the poor gueſt, for

fear of disgracing themselves, yet at the same time wish to convey an idea to every one present that they are amiable and beneficent; and that really they have put themselves out of their way in order to support the pauper by giving him a meal.

My mother's friends were capable and willing to afford every support to enable her to keep up a decent appearance, both at home and abroad, by a respectable assistance; which, when so bestowed, will ever gladden the oppressed mind; but not when offered as a supercilious gift—as who should say, "I am Sir Oracle!"—"How good I am!"

Lear.—"Take physick, Pomp!
"Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
"That thou may'st cast the superflux to them,
"And shew the heav'ns more just."

These kindnesses, assisted by our false, crippled friend, *Hope*, who leads astray the old, the young, the gay, the lively, the rich, and the poor with her delusions, lulled us for a while into a stupid lethargy. At length we were suddenly aroused, by its being seriously pointed out by Mr. Jonas Hanway and others, that they could not help being angry that a lad between seventeen and eighteen, not bred to any business, and whose education had been shamefully neglected, should by his having been accustomed to indulge his own self-will and pleasure, refuse to receive a commission; espe-

cially as I ought to have rejoiced, and have been ready to have accepted of a genteel competency, inſtead of idly preferring hanging on a mother for ſubſiſtence, who was herſelf dependent on others for her ſupport. Theſe hints to a young ſelf-conceited mind, are always received by ſuch unfortunate pets, as the effects of inſolent authority and impertinence.

As I had not then actually experienced the rod of affliction or neceſſity, I did not, or would not perceive the rapid ſtrides I was taking for my deſtruction. There are many ſituations, ſuch as Conway Sands, Lincoln Marſh, &c. where, on a ſummer's eve it may be pleaſant to walk and view the proſpects round; but if thoughtleſsly the proper time for returning is neglected—what had the minute before appeared pleaſing and delightful is ſurrounded with water—ingulfed and ſwallowed up: reflection then comes too late.—This is exemplified by a paſſage in King John:

"For in a night, the beſt part of my power,
"As I upon advantage did remove,
"Were in the waſhes, all unwarily,
"Devoured by the unexpected flood."

From my then ſituation may youths take a leſſon, and

"Learn to be wiſe from other's harm,
"And they will do full well."

Though I had not ſeemingly attended to Mr.

Jonas Hanway's authoritative lecture and remonſtrance; yet conviction inwardly and ſullenly told me, that ſomething muſt be done. The ſtage, my thoughts had not forgot, though I dared not avow my inclination for it, fearing my patrons and mother would not prefer my being a player to that of an officer; and what I dreaded ſtill more, was my hearing a mean opinion delivered of my education, and want of capability as a ſervant of the muſes. However, unknown to them, I plucked up courage, and waited on Mr. Rich, and after rehearſing ſeveral ſpeeches from Richard III. he behaved very familiarly, and deſired me to hear HIM *act Richard III.* and, his acting over, I was without loſs of time enrolled on the liſt of his pupils. After ſome time he taught me a trumpery ſpeech, for to make my appearance as one of the three Ambaſſadors in the Humourous Lieutenant; but after the honour of attending his levees, having free admiſſion behind the ſcenes, and receiving a few leſſons from him, he, to my aſtoniſhment, declared I was incapable of becoming an actor. But whether the fault lay in the preceptor, or in the ſtupidity of the pupil, is difficult to determine; but ſo it was—and my only conſolation was conſtantly attending behind the ſcenes, where I by mere accident grew familiarly

acquainted with Mr. Shuter, the only one who took the leaſt notice of me.

I lived on hopes, however, that Mr. Rich would ere long perceive my genius, which I aſſured myſelf was beyond compare; and ſoon after, on my repeating the firſt ſpeech of Richard III. one morning in the exact tone and manner of old Rich, he ſeemed delighted, and I judged all would ſoon terminate in the accompliſhment of my wiſhes; but the following odd accident fruſtrated all my hopes, and I innocently incurred the fixed diſpleaſure of Mr. Rich—My ideal opinion of greatneſs ouzed away, and what ſenſe I had formerly poſſeſſed was now returning, with a melancholy proſpect before me;—even that of exiſtence ſtared at me with an aſpect that ſtruck with every mortifying and humiliating ſenſation. This total overthrow to all my expectations, was occaſioned by Mrs. Woffington. The cauſe was as follows:—One day my old friend Captain Forbes had invited me to dine with him at the Bedford Arms, and after a choice dinner, with plenty of good wine, &c. the Captain ſaid, "Tate, we will go to the play; (and added) that he wiſhed to go behind the ſcenes:" But as I went there only on ſufferance, I told him it was not in my power to oblige him.—"If ſo" (ſaid my friend George) we will not ſeparate; for I will treat you to the boxes."

Being jolly with the bottle, I aſſented, and when arrived at the theatre, I could not prevail on him to ſit any where but in the ſtage-box. He was in full guard regimentals—myſelf by no means dreſſed fit to appear as his companion; but as he perſiſted, and led the way—I followed, and in the front of his Majeſty's ſtage-box we were ſeated; and no more ſtrange than true, the lower ſides exhibited a beggarly account of empty boxes, and only a few perſons were ſcattered in the front ones; not an extraordinary circumſtance to relate then of an unfaſhionable night at Covent-Garden Theatre. The play was The Conſederacy.

Being in ſuch a conſpicuous ſituation, the eyes of the performers from behind the ſcenes were inſtantaneouſly attracted, on beholding a poor young lad—a mere dependent—(ſkulking nightly behind the curtain) placed in a ſtage box—they were, therefore, aſtoniſhed at my audacity in uſurping and poſſeſſing ſuch a particular ſeat of diſtinction—and a creature, too, that was deſtitute, and ſoliciting for bread; they naturally concluded I had gained admittance by an order, and taken ſuch a place by way of ignorant and impudent bravado, the which deſerved chaſtiſement,—they ſent and ſpoke to Mr. Rich, and it was agreed, that Wilkinſon ſhould be inſtantly ordered from

his improper ſituation. A meſſenger was ſent to put this mandate from Mr. Rich in full force—the box-keeper came to me; and Captain Forbes warm with his wine, and the inſult offered to his friend, ſoon convinced the official meſſenger of his miſtake, and the box-keeper was ſent back to aſſure Mr. Rich, that Mr. Wilkinſon was ſeated there by proper authority; as Captain Forbes, who was well known by being a conſtant box attendant at their theatre, had paid ten ſhillings for admittance. This I was well informed, cauſed a general green-room laugh of contempt, at the expence of the poor poverty-ſtruck gentleman in the ſtage box: But unfortunately Mrs. Woffington, who acted Clariſſa, having been frequently told that I was remarkable for *taking her off*, (as the phraſe was, and is) came cloſe to the ſtage-box, finiſhing her ſpeech with ſuch a ſarcaſtic ſneer at me, as actually made me draw back.—My unfortunate ſtar ſure was then predominant, for at that moment a woman of the town, in the balcony above where I was ſeated, repeated ſome words in a remarkable ſhrill tone, which occaſioned a general laugh; like electricity it caught Mrs. Woffington's ear, whoſe voice was far from being enchanting; on perceiving the pipe ſqueek on her right hand, and being conſcious of the inſult ſhe had then given apparently to me, it ſtruck her comprehenſion

ſo forcibly, that ſhe immediately concluded I had given the retort upon her in that open and audacious manner, to render her acting and tone ridiculous to the audience, as returning contempt for her deviliſh ſneer. She again turned and darted her lovely eyes, tho' aſſiſted by the furies, which made me look confounded and ſheepiſh; all which only ſerved to confirm my condemnation. When the ſcene was finiſhed, and ſhe had reached the green-room—ſhe related my inſolence in ſuch terms, as rendered me a ſubject of abuſe, contempt, and hatred, with all the company; but of that circumſtance I was quite ignorant:—at the inſtant I had, it is true, obſerved, to my mortification, Mrs. Woffington looked angry, but could not divine the real cauſe.

The noon following, when I attended Mr. Rich's levee, I was kept in waiting a conſiderable time; but as that was, and is the too common fate of diſtreſſed dependence—Patience was my friend and companion;—at laſt Mrs. Woffington paſſed through the room, where I was thus humiliated, and without a word, curtſey, or bow of her head, proceeded on to her ſedan, from which ſhe as haughtily returned, and advancing towards me with queen-like ſteps, and viewing me moſt contemptuouſly, ſaid,—"Mr. Wilkinſon, I have made a viſit this morning to Mr. Rich, to com-

mand and to inſiſt on his not giving you any engagement whatever—no, not of the moſt menial kind in the theatre.—Merit you have none—charity you deſerve not,—for if you did my purſe ſhould give you a dinner—your impudence to me laſt night, where you had with ſuch aſſurance placed yourſelf, is one proof of your ignorance; added to that, I heard you echo my voice when I was acting, and I ſincerely hope in whatever barn you are ſuffered as an unworthy ſtroller, that you will fully experience the ſame contempt you dared laſt night to offer me." With a flounce and enraged features, without waiting or permitting me to reply, ſhe darted once more into her chair. I really was ſo aſtoniſhed, frightened, and bewildered, that I knew not how to act or think, but was relieved from longer ſuſpenſe and tedious waiting by a meſſage from Rich, intimating that he could not ſee me at his levee, either that day or in future, or liſten to any engagement whatever; for my behaviour was too groſs and rude to be juſtified, and I muſt immediately depart; but the perſon added, I might continue the liberty of the ſcenes during the ſeaſon, with this proviſo, that I ſhould not on any account, take the freedom to ſpeak to Mr. Rich.—I wiſhed not, nor had the power to make an anſwer.

Proviſions were ſhort at home—my good mo-

ther's poverty increaſed:—One good advantage this diſtreſs produced was, that what I ſhould have devoured *that* day, with my noddle full of vanity, was reſerved for the *next*—my ſtomach being quite ſatisfied with grief, ſhame, and vexation; poverty purſuing my ſteps. My mother of courſe execrated Rich and Woffington—wept over her darling boy, and flew to that Refuge, which ſhe often declared always afforded her ſupport, and had never forſaken her, even when ſinking under the greateſt affliction; and that Refuge was a conſtant addreſs to the Deity, and a truſt in his Divine mercy. However I would not give up the play that night, nor in a pet reſign my permiſſion of being behind the ſcenes; but the theatre was no longer that earthly paradiſe I had formed, for the miſt was removed, and I ſaw actors, actreſſes, and myſelf in a different mirror, which convinced me what we all really were.

When I went into the green-room, an univerſal laugh of contempt enſued—Woffington, the queen bee of the hive, was there—I had diſturbed and offended her Majeſty; and therefore all her faithful ſervants, bee like, joined to ſting me, except Mr. Shuter, who ſaw my diſtreſs and good naturedly took me by the hand—led me to his dreſſing-room, and deſired me not to be caſt down; but obſerved I muſt not enter the green-room

again, as they were one and all determined on my banishment. In such a situation, it will naturally be conceived I had a claim to pity and some little protection, and that players must of course be the most cruel of all people.

But I must in justice clear them from that imputation, as they are in general benevolent, and always ready to relieve the unfortunate; but I had in their opinion, then, forfeited all title to commiseration and assistance; as they felt themselves much hurt with the constant accounts they heard of my rendering most of the leaders in their profession ridiculous by my freedom of mimicry, and the open and audacious affront which they believed and assured themselves I had given to Mrs. Woffington; which could not be removed or palliated. Mrs. Woffington being generous, familiar, and friendly to the comedians, it was not surprising that they should obey her mandate, which, added to their own supposed wrongs, agreed with their inclinations; therefore, as a common cause, they all concluded such treatment to me, was only inflicting strict justice on an ignorant, pretending upstart.

I own I often at that time practised this said talent, and had frequently set the table in a roar, but that without any design or intention of injury to any one. The fact lies plainly here—we can all laugh

at each other's foibles and peculiarities; but think our own are not perceived, or if perceived, should be overlooked.—If to do, were as eaſy as to ſay, what ought to be done, and ſuch a mode was adopted, adieu all murdering of reputations, and private peace, that gorgeous meal for Malignity. I confeſs, as a joker, to have been free, but never ſtabbed in the dark; and I do alſo profeſs, I kindly ſet down my own ſatire as harmleſs, and from my heart moſt nobly and truly have forgiven injuries, but *fear* I, ſhall never bring myſelf to eſteem thoſe who ignorantly and wickedly have preſented me in colours moſt diſguſtful, and that in a point wherein they were ſo bewildered and *egregiouſly* miſtaken, that the true foundation of the ſtory, ſo far from ſhame or diſgrace, had *honour* and real humanity for its ſupporters. At my laſt moments, if able to articulate, I ſhall not, even in the agony of death, deviate from this ſolemn oath and awful aſſeveration. I have not inſerted this on *my own account*; but as incumbent on myſelf to clear the aſperſed, the unfortunate, and miſerable, and I could wiſh my avowal recorded in the golden letters of truth over my grave. *Where nothing—no nothing, can touch me further!*

It is too often demonſtrative, and much to be lamented, that perſons of diſtinguiſhed rank and pride, can forget their true dignity, and, inſtigated

by the appetite for ſcandal, yield and mingle with the vulgar herd, and on a bare ſuppoſition meanly ſtoop to throw poiſoned arrows on the defenceleſs; who, if they themſelves at that moment were reminded of the crimes and miſdemeanors of their own families, would ſhudder and ſhrink appalled. —Go, bid them laugh at that!

Verily we all can ken many of ſuch deſcription; but as they are numerous, there is not any occaſion for any one to put on the cap—*unleſs it fits.* He who cannot riſe ſuperior to calumny may be a good man, but never a contented one. I will quit this intruſive matter, and calmly obſerve to anonymous vipers—"Malice ſcorned, puts out "itſelf;—but, argued, gives a kind of credit to a "falſe accuſation.

But I muſt return to Mrs. Woffington, and be her theatrical herald and faithful chronologer. She ever had a train of admirers; ſhe poſſeſſed wit, vivacity, &c. but never permitted her love of pleaſure and conviviality, to occaſion the leaſt defect in her duty to the public as a performer. Six nights in the week has been often her appointed lot for playing without murmuring; ſhe was ever ready at the call of the audience; and though in the poſſeſſion of all the firſt line of characters, yet ſhe never thought it improper or a degradation of her

conſequence, to conſtantly play the Queen in Hamlet, Lady Ann in Richard III. and Lady Percy in Henry IV. Parts which are mentioned as inſults in the country, if offered to a lady of conſequence.

Read this, ye heroes and heroines!—She alſo cheerfully acted Hermione, or Andromache; Lady Pliant, or Lady Touchwood; Lady Sadlife, or Lady Dainty; Angelica, or Mrs. Frail; and ſeveral others alternately, as beſt ſuited the intereſt of her manager.

At nine years old, I became acquainted with Mrs. Barrington of Covent-Garden Theatre, by being at the ſame ſchool at Wandſworth with Mr. T. Hale, her ſon by her firſt huſband, Mr. Hale the actor. I had for ſome years been kindly received by her, and annually at the time of her benefit, traverſed from St. Paul's to Weſtminſter to diſpoſe of tickets, which canvaſs generally proved productive; but now the child of ſorrow, and having incurred the hatred of Mrs. Woffington, to whom Mrs. Barrington was a cloſe intimate, even to adulation, ſhe withdrew her courtly ſmile, glance, or nod, from poor Tate, who ſhe was once proud of acknowledging.

One evening, ſome few weeks after my late mentioned diſgrace, Mrs. Woffington was acting Lady Dainty, in the Double Gallant—Mrs. Bar-

rington, Sylvia; Mrs. Vincent, Clarinda. I ventured after much hesitation, to say to Mrs. Barrington, I thought Mrs. Woffington looked beautiful—Mrs. Barrington tossed up her head and said, That was no news, as she looked so every night; at which she and Mrs. Vincent laughed:—this occasioned Mrs Woffington to turn her head, and condescendingly ask, What they were smiling at? Mrs. Barrington replied, that the young man was saying, that Lady Dainty looked beautiful that night, and added, she had told him, there needed not that information, as she always looked so.—Mrs. Woffington viewing me disdainfully, cried, Poor Creature!—O God! says I, what shall I do for bread!—I had better exhibit in a barn, but am not sure if I can even get that situation.—My only comfort was my acquaintance with the facetious Ned Shuter; it grew soon to a strong friendship, for he took me to all his parties, and that made my time glide more pleasantly. I mentioned his kindness to my confidant Captain Forbes; and also informed him what excellent company Shuter was—He said he looked upon his civility shewn to me as an obligation to himself. He was then appointed on the command of the Savoy Guard, and he desired I would constantly be with him, and present a general invitation to Mr. Shuter; the compliment Shuter seemed highly pleased with, accepted

of the favour offered him, and went with me there very often.

We had many pleaſant parties; Captain Forbes and Shuter grew very intimate. Shuter's talents were wonderfully ſhrewd, quick, ſenſible, and to a degree highly entertaining.—He was no man's enemy but his own. One evening over our bottle Shuter told me, that his benefit was to be on the 28th of March, and he would *get up* (never performed at Covent-Garden) the farce of Lethe, and would play Mr. Garrick's character of Lord Chalkſtone; and I ſhould repreſent the Fine Gentleman, a difficult part for any actor, and at that time playing by Woodward at Drury-Lane, who was in his zenith, and was certainly the moſt improper character for *me* of any in the whole round of the drama. But moſt young actors think if it be a principal one, the buſineſs is done; for it is a rule fixed in the theatrical corps, that parts make the actor—not the actor the parts. They will alſo urge, that managers can always by ſuch partial means and ſubterfuge create as many great performers as they pleaſe; but a very little reflection would evidently contradict it, to the mortification of moſt of them; becauſe at that rate, the loſs of a grand actor or actreſs could always be ſupplied by the managers: ſo, if their doctrine be true, the favourites of the public ſhould not at any place

trifle with the manager, as according to that ſuppoſition, the performer may fooliſhly and wantonly quit a good ſituation, and the manager from his own creative quality, as the carpenter of genius, could mould and chiſel any block to ſupply ſuch a loſs; but true genius will ſhew itſelf in the ſlighteſt character. Nor did Shakeſpear ever write a Weſtmoreland or Northumberland, without ſtrict attention to their true quality. Now and then actors, nay, even the ladies, miſtake their talents; nor was Mr. Garrick exempt, who acted Lord Townly and Sir Harry Wildair, Othello, Lord Foppington, Pierre, &c. all unfit for him, and they were judged ſo by the Town.—Mr. Moſſop, the Weſt Indian; Mr. Ryan, Varanes; Mrs. Cibber, Lady Townly and Lady Brute; Mr. Barry, Richard; Mrs. Clive, Zara; Quin, Chamont and Young Bevil, and all this by their own choice; therefore, if ſuch perſons of judgment and experience were led away by their performing characters unfit for them, it is not to be wondered at that I, young and inexperienced, ſhould attempt the Fine Gentleman.

However, advertiſed for it I was; and away went Shuter and myſelf to Monmouth Street, where for two guineas, I was equipped with the loan of a heavy, rich, glaring, ſpangled, embroidered velvet ſuit of clothes, and in this full dreſs, fit for the King

in Hamlet, with my hair in papers, did I advance with timid ſteps, through crowds of people; for Shuter's popularity had brought the whole London world. A large amphitheatre was built on the ſtage, numbers were lying on the ground; and only one entrance on each ſide to get on the ſtage, and that was with great difficulty obtained; however at laſt I was produced on the centre of Covent-Garden boards as a performer—and, O grief of griefs! as a *Fine Gentleman!*—A great number of my late father's friends were aſſembled. The prepoſſeſſion in favour of his ſufferings—the public clamour, and pity of the audience on my known deſtitute ſituation, gained me ſuch a reception as might have miſled a wiſer head than mine; as audiences every where, but at London in particular, are ever conſiderate and encouraging to a young performer. I do not mean to inſinuate here that I poſſeſſed the Promethean heat, but it gave me courage to proceed; for it was a perpetual applauſe. I endeavoured to copy Woodward, but with aukwardneſs, and having no knowledge of the ſtage, &c. it certainly was a dreadful performance; not, but that ſome of my friends thought, from the great approbation that was given, and having no opinion of their own, I had done wonders.

I was ſo highly ſatisfied with myſelf, that as ſoon

as the ſcene was over, and not having patience to wait till I was ſummoned with the other characters by Mercury at the end of the farce, I took a chair to Mrs. Townſend's, where my mother was ſitting, and entered amongſt the aſtoniſhed circle of old ladies aſſembled together—all glittering with my fine dreſs, and quite elevated with the applauſe and my own conceit, myſelf being the harbinger of the joyful news. The partial mother ſeeing her ſon ſo fine, and fully perſuaded he had acted well, could not reſtrain the gliſtening tear, no doubt prognoſticating in her mind, that ſhe beheld in her offspring a ſecond Garrick—My ignorance was ſo great that I had intended alſo to have obliged the town with the Frenchman, in the ſame farce, but was luckily perſuaded from it, for if that had really happened, it muſt not only have deprived me of that happy night, but have made it one of horror, and irretrievable damnation.

Friday, April the 19th, was fixed for the benefit of Mr. Bencraft, and Mr. Coſtollo, at Covent-Garden; the play was Alexander, and the part of Alexander, by Mr. Barry; they applied to me for to ſtudy Don Quixote in England, and I readily agreed to it; but thanks for once to my ſtupidity, I was under the neceſſity of giving it up, as I could not by any means drive the words into my

pate, and if I had, it muſt have proved an unfortunate attempt; therefore that Quixote ſcheme being abandoned, Lethe was again ſubſtituted, and they requeſted of me to act the Fine Gentleman, which I conſented to; not but that I inwardly thought *my* Alexander would have done as much for their intereſt as Mr. Barry's. However as that was not their opinion, why, hey for the river Styx once more! and I ſurely that night needed a draught of Lethean waters to forget my cares.

A dreſs was to ſeek; for Beneraft and Coſtollo would not pay ſo extravagantly as Shuter had, for the hire of the grand velvet ſuit; therefore the wardrobe of the theatre was to furniſh me: but all the decent modern clothes were appropriated to the principal actors; and on inſpecting the grand repoſitory, Mr. Whitfield the wardrobe-keeper, produced a very ſhort old ſuit of clothes, with a black velvet ground, and broad gold flowers, as dingy as the twenty four letters on a piece of gilded gingerbread—this apparel had not been brought to light ſince the firſt year Garrick played Lothario, at that theatre in 1746; when Quin acted Horatio, which was the laſt character that he performed, in the laſt week of May 1751, as an engaged actor, though he played twice after that his favourite character of Falſtaff, for his friend Ryan's benefits, 1752 and 1753.

The ſuit being Garrick's, I with eagerneſs ſnatched at it. Bedecked in that ſable array, for the modern Fine Gentleman, and to make that appearance complete, I added an old red ſurtout, trimmed with a dirty white fur, and a deep ſkinned cape of the ſame hue, honoured by old Giffard, I was informed, at Lincoln's Inn-Fields theatre, to exhibit King Lear in. This grand dreſs, with an old ſtock muff, uſed for the Gentleman Uſher in the Rehearſal, my hair in papers, as on my firſt curious exhibition, gave the *tout enſemble* to my all accompliſhed figure; that, when quite equipt, had it not been for the whimſical contradiction of my large paper curls, Lord Chalkſtone's motley Nephew of delicate notions might have paſſed in a barn for a ſtrolling Sciolto. No ſooner had I made my *entrée*, than an involuntary fit of laughter ſeized the whole houſe from below to above, and from above to below, for ſuch a contraſt to the name or idea of a Fine Gentleman ſure never was till then beheld; the prepoſterous figure was heightened in abſurdity, by Woodward's appearing every week in that character with infinite credit. His acting was aſſiſted by every elegance that whim, dreſs, fancy, judgment and faſhion could beſtow; whilſt poor Pilgarlick choſe to finiſh the curious appearance, by quitting Woodward's manner entirely, and ſpoke in my own voice,

which is naturally deep; ſo that my tones were drowned with the exceſſive laughter, and when I made my exit as the Fine Gentleman, whether the peals of mirth or the univerſal hiſſes were the ſtrongeſt, ſeemed difficult to diſtinguiſh. I would not appear again at the concluſion of the piece, but flew to Shuter's dreſſing-room to tear of my pomp and know myſelf, but wanted not a ſedan to convey me as before to Mrs. Townſend's. The next day's reflection preſented freſh difficulties and approaching ruin.

Unfit for the ſtage, what could I do? My mother's exiſtence was procured by the ſale or pawning every trifle that could raiſe a few ſhillings; and ſhe trembling to view the darkened proſpect when the laſt reſources were expended, compelled me to wait on Mr. Rich once more, and ſolicit him to retain me on any trifling ſalary for the enſuing year; but I received a ſhort and peremptory "NO! You are unfit for the ſtage, Muſter Whittington, and I won't larn you—you may go, Muſter Whittington;" and he ſtroked his favourite cat.

Summer did not promiſe me better than the winter had done; for with my bad reception I could not get a recommendation or a probability of any engagement whatever, even in the country. Monday, May 17, 1757, As You Like It, was acted at Covent-Garden, for the benefit of Mr.

Anderſon, Mr. Wignel, and a Mad. Gondou. I was ſtanding near the wing as Mrs. Woffington in Roſalind, and Mrs. Vincent in Celia, were going on the ſtage in the firſt act. Mrs. Woffington ironically ſaid ſhe was glad to have that opportunity of congratulating me on my ſtage ſucceſs; and did not doubt, but ſuch merit would inſure me an engagement the following winter? I bowed but made her no anſwer—I knew her diſlike to me, and was humiliated ſufficiently, and needed not any ſlight to ſink me lower. For then, and not till then, adverſity had taught me to know myſelf. She went through Roſalind for four acts without my perceiving ſhe was in the leaſt diſordered, but in the fifth ſhe complained of great indiſpoſition. I offered her my arm, the which ſhe graciouſly accepted; I thought ſhe looked ſoftened in her behaviour, and had leſs of the *hauteur*. When ſhe came off at the quick change of dreſs, ſhe again complained of being ill; but got accoutred and returned to finiſh the part, and pronounced in the epilogue ſpeech, "If it be true that good "wine needs no buſh—it is as true that a good "play needs no epilogue," &c. &c.—But when arrived at—"If I were among you I would kiſs as "many of you as had beards that pleaſed me."—her voice broke, ſhe faultered, endeavoured to go on, but could not proceed—then in a voice of

tremor ſcreamed, O God! O God! tottered to the ſtage door ſpeechleſs, where ſhe was caught. The audience of courſe applauded till ſhe was out of ſight, and then ſunk into awful looks of aſtoniſhment, both young and old, before and behind the curtain, to ſee one of the moſt handſome women of the age, a favourite principal actreſs, and who had for ſeveral ſeaſons given high entertainment, ſtruck ſo ſuddenly by the hand of death in ſuch a ſituation of time and place, and in her prime of life, being then about forty-four. She was given over that night, and for ſeveral days; but ſo far recovered as to linger till near the year 1760, but exiſted as a mere ſkeleton; *ſans* teeth, *ſans* eyes, *ſans* taſte, *ſans* every thing.—Vain is Beauty's gaudy flower!

She died in rich circumſtances. Colonel Cæſar of the guards, was by agreement to have received all her poſſeſſions, it having been ſettled between the Colonel and Mrs. Woffington, that which of the two, was the ſurvivor ſhould inherit all that the other poſſeſſed; and this was ſigned by a will by each party. But the generous Colonel was deceived; for ſhe ſecretly made an after will, while her Colonel was engaged out at a dinner, and left every article whatever to her ſiſter, Mrs. Cholmondeley. I don't believe, even the *ſhilling* was bequeathed him; and her ſiſter not chuſing to omit, or let any infringement prevent her from faith-

fully executing the will of the dead, demanded all Mrs. Woffington's paraphernalia from Mrs. Barrington, with whom all her ſtage jewels were left in truſt, and from their long acquaintance ſhe expected to enjoy them in their full luſtre, with a good legacy added to cheer her woe on the occaſion; but to her great ſurpriſe, mortification, and diſappointment, the whole, even to the minuteſt article was demanded, and Mrs. Barrington was unwillingly compelled to reſign her crown, her coronet, and all the marks of royal diſtinction, belonging to the late Queen Margaret.

This profuſion of ſtage pomp and grandeur, the moſt rich and elegant of the kind, and all of them ſet in ſilver, in the hands of an actreſs, was a property of great conſequence, looked moſt ſplendid, and would have deſcended from Queen to Queen, from Phœdra to Cleopatra, from Hermione to the Grecian Daughter in due tragical will-progreſſion; but in the hands of a lady of faſhion, only a few of them could with propriety be worn, and as what profit could ariſe from the ſale of them, muſt be indeed contemptible, I wonder ſhe had not the pleaſure of making a genteel gift to an old friend and acquaintance of her ſiſter's, particularly as Mrs. Cholmondeley was ſecure of all the real jewels, &c.

Having ſo often mentioned Mrs. Woffington, I

naturally apprehend many perſons who have not had the pleaſure of ſeeing her, would like a ſhort deſcription of that celebrated actreſs; and having related ſo many particulars concerning that lady, and pronounced authoritatively how much I was thought a ſtrong caricature of her ſtage manner, it might be judged that I could give ſome ideas as to a ſimilitude; which indeed I can with the ſtrongeſt traits, and at the ſame time compliment the preſent age on their poſſeſſing an actreſs, in a firſt poliſhed character, in the arch and attractive *Miſs Farren*. Such parts as Lady Townly, Maria, Millamant, &c. now repreſented by her, were formerly thought Mrs. Woffington's beſt line of acting. Miſs Farren is to a certainty very like Mrs. Woffington in ſome points, and enchantingly ſuperior in others: Miſs Farren, as to every intrinſic quality, may bid the world look on, ſcrutinize, and envy; while on the oppoſite ſide, we are compelled to place comparatively Mrs. Woffington, (who alſo had her ſhare of praiſe-worthy qualities) yet a veil will be ſometimes neceſſary to ſhade the frailties too often prevalent over the human diſpoſition.

Their complexions and features much alike——Miſs Farren will be more like ten years hence; before which time I hope ſhe will be diſtinguiſhed by ſome other appellation.

MRS. WOFFINGTON.	MISS FARREN.
Mrs. Woffington was tall - - - - -	So is Miſs Farren.
Mrs. Woffington was beautiful - - -	So is Miſs Farren.
Mrs. Woffington was elegant - - - -	So is Miſs Farren.
Mrs. Woffington was well bred - - -	So is Miſs Farren.
Mrs. Woffington had wit - - - - -	So has Miſs Farren.
Mrs. Woffington had a harſh, broken, and diſcordant voice - - - - - -	Miſs Farren's muſical and bewitching.
Mrs. Woffington *could be* rude and vulgar -	Miſs Farren *never*.

So undoubtedly Miſs Farren ſeizes the wreath of Fame with ſecurity, as ſhe adds to her perfections, in the Scale of Merit, virtue, modeſty, reverence to a parent, and every other endearing quality; therefore with propriety and for the credit of the Drama, let me hurl my cap and cry——

Long live THE FARREN.

So my dear, agreeable Miſs Farren, for the preſent adieu—and now let me inform the reader, that on the night of Mrs. Woffington's fatal illneſs, Mr. Wignell, an under actor at Covent-Garden, was enliſting troops to form a party at Maidſtone in Kent, where it was ſaid there had not been a company of comedians for ſome years; and that one from London would of courſe do wonders. I aſked Mrs. Barrington to intercede for me, but ſhe refuſed any interference; I therefore waited on Mr. Wignell, who told me, he was erecting a wooden booth at Maidſtone, and that Mr. and Mrs. Barrington, who uſually went to Briſtol, were diſappointed that year on account of ſome diſpute with the mayor, and he ſhould find in them (his couſins) a tower of ſtrength.

Mr. Barrington, was not a very good comedian; but yet was in low Iriſhmen, (Mr. Moody indeed excepted) the beſt I ever ſaw—ſuch as the Teagues, in the Committee, Twin Rivals, &c. but would have been a bad Major O'Flaharty, as he was in

fact a very indifferent Sir Callaghan. Miſs Hallam was to be there, niece to Mrs. Barrington, and had been bred under her with the utmoſt care and reared to be an accompliſhed actreſs, as the reader will allow, when I announce that Miſs Hallam is the preſent Mrs. Mattocks; for whom I have, and ſhall ever retain the higheſt regard; and am indebted to both Mr. and Mrs. Mattocks, for repeated acts of kindneſs and friendſhip.

I was, from the emergency of Mr. Wignell's company not being filled, to my delight accepted as a ſharer, and enrolled one of their commonwealth. The performers collected for this Kentiſh expedition were—Mr. Wignell, Mr. Barrington, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Smith, Mr. Haughton, Mr. Clough, Mr. Jones, Mr. Wilkinſon, Mr. Buck, Mr. Caſtle;—Mrs. Barrington, Miſs Morriſon (now Mrs. Hull), Miſs Bradſhaw, Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Wignell, Mrs. Haughton, and Miſs Hallam.

I got home, and judged that I had for once done ſomething like a tranſaction of buſineſs; and alſo found I had the intereſt of a great friend of my mother's, who I have the honour at this day to call a relation, and to whom I am and have been greatly obliged;—the Lady's name was Wardale, ſhe lived at Carliſle. To thoſe who

knew her, I need not add praiſe; thoſe who did not, may regret that they had not the pleaſure of being acquainted with ſuch an agreeable, ſenſible, well bred woman.

This Mrs. Wardale, anxious for my ſituation and welfare, had prevailed on the Honourable Miſs Foley, ſiſter to Lord Foley, to aſk the favour of a letter of recommendation from her intimate friend, Lord Mansfield, to Mr. Garrick; which his Lordſhip immediately complied with: ſo with thoſe credentials I was to proceed on a viſit the next day, and which I aſſure the reader ſeemed to me to require more than common fortitude. I marched up and down Southampton ſtreet three or four times before I dared rap at this great man's door, as fearing inſtant diſmiſſion might follow; or what appeared to me almoſt as dreadful, if graciouſly admitted, how I ſhould be able to walk, move, or ſpeak before him. However the rap was at laſt given, and the deed was done paſt all retreating.—"Is Mr. Garrick at home?"—"Yes."—Then delivering the letter from Miſs Foley, with an encloſed one from Lord Mansfield, and after waiting in a parlour for about ten minutes, I was ordered to approach. Mr. Garrick glanced his ſcrutinizing eye firſt at me, then at the letter, and ſo alternately; at laſt—"Well, Sir—Hey!—What, now you are a ſtage

candidate? Well, Sir, let me have a taſte of your quality."—I, diſtilled almoſt to jelly with my fear, attempted a ſpeech from Richard, and another from Eſſex; which he encouraged, by obſerving, I was ſo much frightened, that he could not form any judgment of my abilities; but aſſured me, it was not a bad omen, as fear was by no means a ſign of want of merit, but often the contrary. We then chatted for a few minutes, and I felt myſelf more eaſy, and requeſted leave to repeat a few ſpeeches in imitation of the then principal ſtage repreſentatives. "Nay—now," ſays Garrick, "Sir, you muſt take care of this, for I uſed to call myſelf the firſt at this buſineſs." —I luckily began with an imitation of Foote. It is difficult here to determine whether Garrick hated or feared Foote the moſt; ſometimes one, ſometimes the other was predominant; but from the attention of a few minutes, his looks brightened—the glow of his countenance transfuſed to mine, and he eagerly deſired a repetition of the ſame ſpeech. I was animated—forgot Garrick was preſent, and ſpoke at perfect eaſe.—"Hey, now! Now—what—all"—ſays Garrick, "How—really this—this—is—(with his uſual heſitation and repetition of words)—Why—well—well—Do call on me again on Monday at eleven, and you may depend upon every aſſiſtance in my power. I will

ſee my brother manager, Mr. Lacey, to-day and let you know the reſult.

I now really thought Fortune had done with tormenting me. Honoured not only with the approbation, but friendſhip of that great man, I was elated into a degree of rapture I had not experienced for a long time; and in truth I fancied that, ſhould the infallible Pope Garrick quit the ſtage, either by death, choice, or accident, I ſhould in a few ſeaſons be able to ſupply the vacant chair: So light is vanity! I did not walk, but flew to my lodgings, where my poor anxious mother ſat trembling for the event—the noiſe I made in running up the ſtairs, and my countenance on entering the room, denoted in full evidence, that ſhe was to receive good—not bad news. On my relating to her Mr. Garrick's kind behaviour, and his aſſurance of ſerving me, ſhe concluded her ſon Tate's fortune was made: She bleſſed Garrick! ſhe bleſſed me! and we were both for that day perfectly happy. Something may be ſaid in favour of my belief at that time, as I was unacquainted with managers, actors, theatres, and the world: Not that I mean to inſinuate that every manager is a devil—I know the contrary: That managers are men, and have their faults, and ſometimes act wrong, is natural, and a ſpice of the devil in the compoſition is abſolutely neceſſary, or

what would become of a manager at times, when ſurrounded by agitated fiends.

Mine and my mother's dinner that day (the 25th of May) was moſt luxuriant; and I can affirm that neither his Majeſty nor any of his ſubjects dined with better appetite or greater happineſs—not even my old *friend* Mrs. *Bellamy* *; who deſcribes, as ſhe ſat on the bottom ſtep of Weſtminſter Bridge, where ſhe remained for ſeveral minutes watching the gently ſwelling tide, and blaming its tardy approach; but thinking better of it, ſhe changed her cold ſituation and choſe to return home, where ſhe found her maid to her great ſurpriſe had provided a good ſupper, and declares that, even in the moſt elevated ſituation, ſhe ever was in, and when her table has been ſpread with dainties, that ſhe never made a more pleaſing meal. So

The King of France with twenty thouſand men,
March'd up the hill, and then march'd down again.

Shakſpeare remarks, "If the man go to the "water and drown himſelf, it is will he, nill "he, he goes; mark you that; but if the water "come to him, and drown him, he drowns not "himſelf."

On the Monday, I negligently ſlid up South-ampton-ſtreet, not with the tottering attendant fear of the preceeding week. I was ſpruced out,

* See her Apology, vol. v. page 61.

knocked at the door with a degree of aſſurance, was inſtantly admitted, and not only found Mr. Garrick alone, but as ſoon as he ſaw me, he expreſſed a wiſh of impatience for my promiſed viſit; ſaid he had heard a moſt favourable account of my mother, of whom he had made an enquiry, and ſhould be glad for the ſake of ſo deſerving a woman to aſſiſt me to the utmoſt of his power.—This was a cordial to my heart; and I believe it may be made a certain obſervation, that whenever young or old wait on a ſuperior as a dependent character he or ſhe is anxiouſly tremulous, until ſatisfied whether the grant can be obtained or not. But now all appeared to me in a happy train.—Mr. Garrick ſaid, "Young Gentleman, I have ſeen Mr. Lacey, and we have determined to put you on the books at thirty ſhillings per week the enſuing ſeaſon.——I will think of ſome line of characters for you to perform on the ſtage—my time is ſhort, and not at my diſpoſal this morning as I muſt be at Hampton to dinner; therefore, as I am on the wing, do oblige me with a repetition of what you recited laſt Saturday.—I readily complied, and executed it with ſpirit.—From the imitation of Foote I proceeded with great alacrity to ſeveral others; and when I came to thoſe of Mr. Barry and Mrs. Woffington, as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, I was obliged to

ſtop, he ſeemed ſo truly entertained. I thought it very comical, and that the joke might not be loſt, I laughed too; but on the merriment ceaſing, I perceived a concealed third laugher—the Lady Teazle behind the ſcreen, which greatly puzzled me; when on a ſudden, a green cloth double door flew open, which I found led to a little breakfaſt parlour, and diſcovered a moſt elegant lady—no leſs a perſonage than Mrs. Garrick, who had it ſeems been purpoſely poſted there for her ſecret opinion of my imitations of Foote; as Mr. Garrick always affected to pay great compliment to her judgment and opinion, and I really believe not all acted complaiſance, but founded on real eſteem—But like his brethren mortals had his frailties.

Mrs. Garrick apologized for her rudeneſs and intruſion—confeſſed ſhe had taken poſſeſſion of that ſnug ſpot unobſerved, at the deſire of Mr. Garrick, as from his account of my imitations on the Saturday, ſhe expected to be much gratified; but when ſhe heard the tones of Mrs. Woffington, the ridicule was ſo ſtrongly pointed, that it was not in her power to reſtrain from laughter, by the pleaſure and great ſatisfaction ſhe had received. If it had happened otherwiſe Mrs. Mouſe would not have appeared, but kept ſnug in her hole.—Perhaps female prejudice here might ope-

rate in my favour, as Mr. Garrick had previous to his marriage with Madam Violette, paid his devoirs to Mrs. Woffington.

Before I took my leave, I acquainted our Roſcius with my intention relative to Maidſtone, which he approved, and ſaid practice would acquire me freedom and eaſe on the ſtage—it was what he had done previous to his public appearance in London: But the chief leſſon he would give to a young man, trying his fortune on the ſtage, was *ſobriety*; and above all—in a great character, or in an inferior one, however trifling it might be, always to be perfect: For that, he obſerved, was the ground-work for excellence in every walk of the drama; and by attention to the author, a novice would ſoon find from the feelings of his audience his natural bent, as without being maſter of the words, no actor could comprehend or execute the character, or ſo far forget himſelf as to aſſume the being another perſon, whether a king or a cobbler. Actors, he ſaid, often miſtook their talents by following their inclinations in lieu of their real genius; but, if always perfect, a lucky hit might ſet them right, and perhaps in the very characters they expected to fail *in*. Here ended Garrick's leſſon; I made my bow and departed, not doubting but when the autumn approached I ſhould read my name

in the news-papers, and (as the Apprentice ſays) ſtuck in large capitals,

The part of OTHELLO, *by a Young Gentleman.*

But—" Hope thou haſt told me lies from day to day."

In a week my expedition to Maidſtone commenced. My mother with much difficulty equipped me with five guineas; Capt. Forbes gave me a flaming purple ſatin waiſtcoat, profuſely trimmed with ſilver, ſuch was the faſhion of thoſe times, which I reſerved for Sundays and viſiting days.

I ſtepped into the Graveſend boat, and for one ſhilling, ſailed with a fair wind, and arrived at the end of my voyage ſafe, (but ſick) and from Graveſend a ſtage-coach conveyed me to Chatham, and the next day in a chaiſe I arrived at Maidſtone. It ſeemed to me a very long journey, for going once with my father to Sheerneſs, when about the age of fourteen, (on ſome election buſineſs for a Mr. Taffe of Ireland) was my extent of travelling; and Richmond, Hampton Court, and Greenwich, what I called going into the country; and Cockney-like, thought my being once with Captain Forbes to Windſor, a tedious journey. The country about Maidſtone ſeemed delightful, but now it is almoſt paſt my remembrance.

Mr. Garrick had, unknown to me, ſpoke to

Miſs Bradſhaw, then of his theatre, (but now no more) to keep me as much as poſſible under petticoat government, and to be one of her party at tea, cards, &c. and to obſerve how I went on, and to ſend him *minute* information. In conſequence of his requeſt, I was admitted, like *Petulant* or *Witwoud*, into the female club, on firſt ſubſcribing the proper allotment ſtated for tea, coffee, ſugar, &c. The quartette conſiſted of Mrs. Bradſhaw, Mrs. Roberts, Miſs Morriſon, and myſelf. This brought on not only an acquaintance, but a laſting friendſhip, and high eſteem between Mrs. Hull and me. If riches immenſe could be added to her other good qualities, my praiſe here would not be neglected, but read with pleaſure. The latter part of the ſeaſon brought Mr. Hull; ſhe introduced me to that gentleman, and with whom good fellowſhip and good will has from that time, and ever will, I hope, remain between us.

Were I to expatiate on the kindneſſes I have experienced from Mr. and Mrs. Hull, I ſhould make ſuch a digreſſion as might not be excuſed, and therefore will conclude with thanks, and truly wiſhing them every happineſs and proſperity.

We opened at Maidſtone with the Beaux Stratagem.—Archer, Mr. Wignell; Aimwell, Mr. Wilkinſon; Foigard, Mr. Barrington; Dorinda,

Mrs. Barrington; Mrs. Sullen, Miſs Morriſon.—Not more than five pounds in the houſe; I was much frightened, *very imperfect*, and more alarmed than when I firſt ſported my figure in the Fine Gentleman; the play (except as to myſelf) was got through decently. The little motley troop from London certainly deſerved more attention and encouragement than was beſtowed.

Mrs. Barrington had an excellent wardrobe of her own; and being the intimate of Mrs. Woffington, had the entire treaſure of her tragedy jewels, which at that time Mrs. Barrington eyed as her own property, by having nine parts of the law in her favour—poſſeſſion. Her royal train ſhould alone have been ſufficient to have allured the country Bumpkins. Added to the tragedy diamonds, Mr. and Mrs. Barrington amazed the eyes and ears of the little ſtreets with a very handſome one-horſe chair, and every noon took a genteel airing; they were well-bred, ſenſible, and behaved properly to every body there; living with oeconomy and every decency, which could cauſe them to be eſteemed and reſpected, and were a credit to their profeſſion. Our houſes were ſhockingly attended, though even I, was the Romeo, Barnwell, Shore, Oreſtes, and the Douglas. In Douglas, (without a joke) I was very well received; but not even my Oreſtes, nor Mrs. Bar-

rington's Andromache, could attract a ſufficient audience. Thoſe who attended we were obliged to diſmiſs from our booth. The conſequence was great grumbling, great poverty, and infinite uneaſineſs—ſome weeks not ſharing ſix ſhillings; and what was as bad—Wignell, my manager, acted Lord Townly, and made me perform a Conſtable, a Drawer, &c. which much offended my dignity, an error moſt young actors and actreſſes are apt to fall into. If the performers do not approve of the parts allotted them, they will againſt obſervation, decency, and common ſenſe, ever take pains to be ridiculous, rude, and abſurd, by which behaviour they are certain every judicious thinking ſpectator, beſtows the cenſure on them which ſuch conduct deſerves—be it in a village, a barn, or theatre.

A performer will never convert an audience to the belief, of finding him worthy of being truſted with a thouſand lines, if he does not ſpeak *ſix* with great care, attention and propriety. What leads actors in ſome meaſure into this unfortunate and ill-conceived practice for their future welfare, is liſtening to idle, diſſipated companions, who too often are termed their friends, and encourage them in ſuch behaviour, while they are laughing on the ſtage, becauſe they do not know three lines of their damned parts, as they term them; and

inſtead of joining the hiſs for reformation to make them know themſelves and feel the inſult they have given the audience, applaud them for it, and are the occaſion of leading the performers next day into what Colley Cibber juſtly remarks, "A jolly negligence of rehearſals, and teach them to become dupes to their own folly." Players ſhould one and all, weekly repeat Shakſpeare's advice: He is the great maſterly explanator—his ſingle, ſhort leſſon, conveys the whole art, and ſays more to the purpoſe, than any laborious writer could cram into the largeſt folio.

Mr. Quin, by proper conception of character, made his firſt impreſſion on the public by his reſpectful manner, when acting the Lieutenant of the Tower: But had Mr. Quin treated it with contempt, (as I did the Conſtable) he might have miſſed the happy tide of Fortune, and continued in obſcurity to the loſs of his own future fame; and the public would never have ſeen him as that excellent actor he ever after remained.

Mr. Quin had wit, generoſity, and a ſtrong underſtanding, and by never forgetting his own dignity, he was never forgot by others: He obtained the reſpect and eſteem of all; his death was as much lamented by all ranks at Bath, where he reſided, as if the firſt man of quality there had departed this life, and poſſeſſed of the ſame good

talents and qualities.—Doctor Muſhett, now in York, will teſtify my aſſertion relative to Mr. Quin, as he attended him to the laſt, and was for years intimately acquainted with him.

I have had the pleaſure of hearing and ſeeing that gentleman within theſe few years, (at General St. Leger's) introduce Mr. Quin's character in ſuch a manner as to be a ſtriking portrait of that celebrated man. A demonſtrative proof that however the illiberal, the ignorant, the malevolent, the envious, and the enthuſiaſt, the conceited, or the vain may treat ſtage profeſſors, yet, where talents are graced with virtues, the actor will be acceptable at any table. It is galling to remark, but it is a truth, that it is the actor which diſgraces the ſtage, and not the ſtage the actor; and the vulgar, not knowing how to diſtinguiſh, indiſcriminately throw the good and the bad in the ſame dirty reſervoir of diſgrace: To prove the aſſertion true, many actreſſes by the help of natural genius only, (the gift of God himſelf) have arrived at the ſummit of fame and faſhion—as Mrs. Oldfield, Bracegirdle, Cibber, Woffington, Bellamy, Crawford, &c. But if perſons of rank and fortune could offer ſuch reſpect to ſtage talents only, what difference muſt they think and feel, when paying that polite tribute where ſuperior talents, adorned by virtue, are combined in the

name of SIDDONS: her example as a wife and mother, the greateſt need not bluſh to follow; and thoſe, who from misfortune labour in a degraded and middling line, may be proud to admire and imitate.

Mrs. Siddons's private worth deſerves regard; the credit of the ſtage may always wiſh it to be preſerved, and never ſtruck from its annals. Mrs. Cibber is the only actreſs my remembrance can compare with Mrs. Siddons; and Mrs. Cibber in five or ſix parts might be, if on the boards, and in equal bloom, able to occaſion the odds; but it would be a conteſt of a confined nature; as Mrs. Siddons's Lady Macbeth, Zara in the Mourning Bride, &c. were characters Mrs. Cibber could not have attempted with any degree of compariſon; and Mrs. Siddons, in a theatrical lottery, would certainly obtain fifteen prizes out of twenty. No bad compliment to Mrs. Siddons: for if her predeceſſors are to be conſidered by her admirers as people who knew nothing of the matter, her praiſe muſt be leſs on a comparative ſtruggle for victory. Certainly, where diſdain, contempt, pride, or indignation are to be expreſſed, it may ſafely be affirmed ſhe there ſtands unrivalled, and is herſelf alone. In one paſſage ſhe always reminds me of Mrs. Cibber in voice, manner, and features, where in Iſabella ſhe pro-

nounces—"Now I defy you!—now I laugh at you, ye tyrants! murderers!"

I do not mean to insinuate Mrs. Siddons has not foibles or faults—I can only say, if she has, I am not acquainted with them. "But," says Ill-nature, "I am sure she does so and so:"——And why so much pains, anxiety, and labour to insinuate that Mrs. Siddons is not all perfection? Let the accusers take the same pains to look at their own faults, and pluck the beam from their own eye, and then fairly make the comparison; and let them ever keep in mind,

> Men's evil manners live in brass, their virtues
> We write in water.——

I will conclude Mrs. Siddons's panegyric with this wish, that every lady on the stage may follow her example in private life; and with proper emulation endeavour to surpass or equal her in her public character.

Having taken the liberty to be so free with my opinion as to the several stage favorites; and having mentioned Mrs. Cibber only as competitor, with Mrs. Siddons, I cannot but in justice and gratitude, also with shame recollect I had forgot Mrs. Yates's merit, not to mention her attractive person. Her Margaret of Anjou stands as much unrivalled as does Mrs. Siddons's Zara; her Epilogue to that play must not be forgot, nor her elegance and various excellencies; or Mrs. Craw-

ford's fifth act of Lady Randolph. I fancy myſelf jogged by ſome Old Critic—"O for ſhame! not to recollect Mrs. Pritchard?" Indeed I do —her manner and perſon were clumſy, her face not delicate, but open and agreeable; yet with that large figure, ſhe in comedy, nay, even in the *Fine Ladies*, threw all competitors at a diſtance. Her Lady Betty Modiſh, Mrs. Sullen, Maria, and Beatrice, were wonderful; and her Clarinda, was ſo eaſy, ſo natural, ſo ſpirited, and vivacious, that in the third act, her comic powers were ſuch as to caſt all other actreſſes at ſo great a diſtance, as made the beautiful Woffington ſhrink under her ſuperior and combined excellence. In tragedy, Lady Macbeth was by much her beſt part—and good acting it was; but ſhe was not ſo finely collected throughout as Mrs. Siddons is in that character. Mr. Garrick aſſured me he did not approve of her tragedy; for her ſcenes of grief were tireſomely blubbering; in no part more remarkably ſo, than in the laſt ſcene of Volumnia in Coriolanus. I had forgot to mention Mrs. Cibber, (though very indifferent indeed) as a comic actreſs, but, to which ſhe fooliſhly gave the preference. She ſpoke an epilogue equal, if not ſuperior to any lady, I remember.

To ſay thoſe Ladies had merit, is the true compliment to thoſe of the preſent day; for what mo-

dern performers inſinuate, that the late actors did not underſtand the art of playing, is paying themſelves a very bad compliment: As I obſerved before, if Mrs. Cibber had been comparatively an indifferent actreſs, where is the wonder that Mrs. Siddons ſhould be ſuperior. I urge, it is Mrs. Cibber's great excellence raiſes Mrs. Siddons's reputation.

Indeed, were ſnarlers to advance, that muſic, operas, theatres, ſingers, and ſplendid ſcenery to plays in the preſent æra, were not on a par with the magnificence of the year 1750, then indeed all credit might with propriety be rendered doubtful, and the names of Barry, Cibber, or even a Garrick's reputation, would require caution and conſideration as to the belief.

Moſt undoubtedly the improvements are wonderful, but beyond the mark of profit; for managers were thirty years ago gentlemen of more than ideal property; but now in all the three kingdoms produce me an independent one: I wiſh there were many contradictions to this aſſertion, and myſelf included in the number.

I have made ſuch a digreſſion on ſtage matters, that I have left myſelf acting the Conſtable, &c. far behind like the priſoner at large, ſo muſt return to Maidſtone duty, where the buſineſs was ſo bad, that we were obliged to begin the benefits, in hopes

that what our good acting could not produce, yet regard for individuals would ſoften their hearts and fill the houſe.—I had the Diſtreſſed Mother; the amount only three pounds!—my profit on the expences being deducted, was actually *one ſhilling and ſixpence, and two pieces of candle*—a diſmal banquet for Prince Oreſtes.—I was reduced to two ſhillings, conſequently under the neceſſity of aſking leave of abſence, (like a boy at ſchool) for not being a Conſtable on the Monday, and I would return on the Wedneſday; which being granted, I reſolved on a long walk, (being then much more convenient than the ſtage-coach) to Graveſend, from thence in the Graveſend boat, arrived in London, and drained three guineas more from my affectionate mother:—Neceſſity has no law. Thus repleniſhed I returned back, and got to Maidſtone on Tueſday night.

I had not expoſed my poverty to the troop, if I had, they were neither able nor willing to have relieved me—avowed poverty would have lowered me immediately; and my five guineas when I firſt went to Maidſtone, had enabled me to appear in a genteel decent manner. On this my firſt tour, I was graſping for great parts, but from timidity, and not having time to be perfect, my proſpect was not the moſt favourable—Miſs Bradſhaw's ſecret account, (a toad eater,

the ſpawn of Adulation,) did not lead Mr. Garrick to any favourable expectations. A curious letter of my own to Mr. Garrick, blotted, badly ſpelt, and very incoherent, confirmed his then growing ill opinion of me; and he had declared from the Maidſtone accounts, which he relied on, that nothing could be done with me. Wilkinſon was a ſtupid lad, and he had, for once, deceived his judgment on a ſudden ſurpriſe.

The buſineſs grew worſe and worſe—benefits inſtead of improving or giving hopes of an approaching harveſt, overſhadowed us with clouds and darkneſs. We were all poor and ſulky—neither to be led nor drove.

"Soldiers unpaid, who hardly did their duty."

The manager, by paying his bills, &c. and being what they termed a good ſtroller; who underſtood well the art of application and ſolicitation, was certain of a good benefit. Mr. and Mrs. Barrington from their dignity, carriage, and divers marks of diſtinction, alſo expected the ſame; nay, ſeemed aſſured of it. Now *we*, the ſaid ſoldiers and our laſſes, did not approve of this determined diſtinction intended by the inhabitants of Maidſtone, to feed the rich and let us poor be the marks for Scorn to point its ſlowly moving finger at. The conſequence was a conſpiracy—which ſoon burſt out and flamed into an open rebel-

lion; a memorial of diſſentients was ſigned and preſented, "That as the playhouſe in the Star "Yard, Maidſtone, was ſo ill attended, and as "there were ſo many ſufferers, they could not— "*would not proceed*, or act any more in that Booth "for the emolument of two or three perſons. As "to continue a fortnight longer would plunge all "in the utmoſt penury and want." Alluded to numerous inconveniencies; therefore, unleſs they were mutual gainers, they would not undergo difficulties and diſtreſs for the advantage of *the Trio*, and themſelves in want of means for exiſtence. This was immediately aſſented to, ſigned and ſealed by the manager, and Mr. and Mrs. Barrington, or a revolt the next day was determined. This demand cannot be juſtified on honeſt grounds; becauſe, had any one of us, four weeks before that, been bleſſed with a crowded houſe, that one would have judged it a robbery to have been compelled by the reſt who had failed to have ſhared the profit amongſt them: however if poverty is a plea for an act of injuſtice, that point we could prove and ſwear to with ſafe conſciences—As we thought Wignell and the Barringtons getting ſuch an amazing ſum as nineteen or twenty pounds was too luxurious a proſpect, while we were in ſo barren and dreary a ſtate. The reſult was, that with the aſſize week and the two

benefits equally divided, matters closed with such brilliancy, that on my return to London I was enabled to restore two guineas back to my mother, in part of payment, for the three she had obtained for me with difficulty; and it was a double gift, as she received it from that welcome visitor her son.

Early in September 1757, Drury-Lane opened, and I attended, as being then enrolled on the royal list of his Majesty's company of comedians. Mr. Garrick acted early in October—his second character was Romeo, and without having looked or spoke to me, or even affording me an opportunity of addressing him when I saw him. On the rehearsal of Romeo and Juliet, I was summoned on the stage by Cross the prompter, who said he had orders from Mr. Garrick that I should wait as a Torch Bearer in the last act, and also as a Waiting Gentleman in every play. On which Mr. Garrick advanced, and, before the company, said aloud, "This, Sir, is my command—and if not "complied with I shall take your coat off and do "the business myself; and you, Sir, will immedi- "ately be dismissed my theatre." There certainly was a severity in this; for though I stood astonished, grieved, and petrified at this sudden appointment, I had not refused; and therefore the pointed manner in which he spoke was tyranny, in a degree I never then had seen exercised with-

out provocation. I cannot but at the prefent moment think this unprovoked behaviour, in my then ſituation, was cruelty to the extreme. What ſecret pique he had for ſuch ſudden treatment I never could learn; but he really made me truly miſerable—and if he aimed at that as an act to gratify ambition, he accompliſhed his purpoſe.

The theatre being for the firſt month opened three nights in a week, my ſalary was only fifteen ſhillings as play-houſe pay, and when got to four nights, merely twenty ſhillings; but that pittance was too material an object for me to think of relinquiſhing. I waited (as it is termed) in the Mourning Bride—the Funeral Proceſſion in Romeo and Juliet—Macbeth, and twice rode a hobby horſe in the Field of Battle, when Garrick acted Bayes. Early in the ſeaſon Mr. Foote was to play Cadwallader, in the Author, which farce had been produced the winter before, and acted with great ſucceſs. Foote was to perform ſix nights, then go to Dublin, and return in January and revive the ſame farce again.—The Author was at that time ſo faſhionable, that *Becky—my dear Becky*, was a conſtant phraſe from all ranks of people both high and low, as they walked the ſtreets of London. I have ever been ſuppoſed a pupil of Mr. Foote's—the fol-

lowing circumſtance will prove the contrary; for on my word of honour, I had never ſeen Mr. Foote till that very ſeaſon, behind the ſcenes, except as a performer on the ſtage;—had I met him in the ſtreet, or ſeen him in a room, I do not believe I ſhould have known him. The laſt week of Mr. Foote's playing in Drury-Lane, previous to his intended trip to Ireland, he was accidentally with Garrick, after his performance of Kitely, as was Mr. Holland and others. The converſation, as I was informed, by chance turned on imitation.—Garrick ſaid, "Egad, Foote! there is a "young fellow engaged with me, who I really "think is ſuperior to either of us at mimicry.— "I uſed to think myſelf well at it, but I actually "give him the preference: He has tried to reſemble "me, but that will not do; though Mrs. Garrick "ſays, ſhe is ſure he will be like me."—"Damn "it!" ſays Foote, "I ſhould like to hear him." Holland, with Garrick's approbation, came immediately to inquire for me. I was ſoon found in the green-room, and eſcorted to the manager's cabinet, aſſuring me that Mr. Garrick wanted to ſee me on particular buſineſs. My heart panted with fear, doubt, and hope, on this unexpected ſummons; after an awkward entrance and a ſilence of a few minutes, my ſuſpenſe was eaſed, by Mr. Garrick very good naturedly ſay-

ing, that he had ſpoke well of me to Mr. Foote, and deſired I would ſatisfy that gentleman with a taſte of my quality, ſuch as firſt ſtruck my fancy; adding, that he expected I would do my beſt in order to convince his *good* friend, Mr. Foote, that his aſſertions of my merit were not exaggerated. I complied, and (as the phraſe is) *took off* ſeveral performers—Barry, Sparks, Woffington, Ridout, Sheridan, &c.—received high encomiums and thanks—made my bow and retired from the auguſt aſſembly. Mr. O——n, now living, not then on the ſtage, can teſtify all theſe particulars.

The next day my friend, Mr. O——n, who was intimate with Foote, waited on me with that gentleman's compliments, intimating, that he was going to Dublin for a few weeks in five or ſix days time.—He had obſerved, Mr. Garrick thought me only fit for his Hobby Horſe in the Rehearſal, and if I wiſhed to be releaſed from ſuch tyranny, he would be glad of my company to Ireland at his own expence, and he would fix me on genteel terms with Mr. Sheridan—that I ſhould appear in Othello, and he would act Iago. This was a cheering cordial elixir to my drooping ſpirits, and to my ſtill more drooping pocket. I turned over in my mind ſeveral of the Iriſh families (mentioned in the early part of this work),

and that was one inducement—another was, my ſituation might be bettered, but it could not be worſe; and on a ſhort reflection, I deſired my reſpectful compliments (with my mother's approbation) to Mr. Foote, and was apprehenſive I might incur Mr. Garrick's diſpleaſure; and if I ſhould be ſo unfortunate as not to meet with a favourable reception in Ireland, I ſhould in conſequence thereof be greatly involved on my return to England, if I ſhould be expelled from Drury-Lane theatre; for though the pittance I then received was ſmall, yet trifling as it was, it was my only ſupport; but if Mr. Foote could obtain Mr. Garrick's permiſſion, I would gladly embrace the offer, begging that Mr. O——n, on the delivering my meſſage would not omit my ſenſe of Mr. Foote's kindneſs and good opinion. Mr. O—n undertook this embaſſy moſt cheerfully, and executed it with friendſhip and punctuality. Mr. Foote, without loſs of time, waited on Mr. Garrick that very day, and acquainted him with what had paſſed, and obtained my leave of abſence for ſix weeks.

On the evening I met my Maſter Garrick at the theatre, who confirmed the above treaty, and ſaid, he was glad of an opportunity to ſerve me, and hoped it would turn out advantageous; but as it was probable as well as poſſible the expedi-

tion might fail, and I might not meet with ſucceſs, he had from his motives of tenderneſs for me, conſulted with Mr. Lacey, his brother manager, and that I might not want an aſylum, in caſe of failure and diſappointments, he had ordered an article to be drawn up for two years from that day, the 20th of October, to the end of the ſeaſon 1759.

The managers giving me their conſent for an abſence of ſix weeks with Mr. Foote, I dared not object to the propoſal; and indeed thought his reaſons friendly, and afforded a proſpect of bread for two years, by which time I hoped that warmer days might come. The article of courſe was prepared and ſigned. My equipment was poorly provided—my old black was my only ſuit, a ſmall pair of bags eaſily contained my wardrobe. My mother dreaded this long voyage, and being uſed to vexation and croſſes—experience made her give me but little hopes from Iriſh hoſpitality, or the appearance of a ſhabby diſtreſſed lad, ſoliciting favours——

For friends will fly you in the time of need.

From lodging, livelihood, and ſupport, all that my mother could ſpare to give me to ſupply my empty purſe with was ſix ſhillings; but luckily Mrs. Wardale, the lady of Carliſle, before-mentioned, hearing of my journey, and

knowing mine and my mother's inability, presented me with two guineas. I took leave of my affectionate parent—met Mr. Foote at the Bedford Arms, and in one hour after, set off with him in a post chaise, and his servant on horseback: We only travelled that night to his little cottage at Elstree, in Hertfordshire. Two days after that, we dined at Kitty Keney's, at West Chester, and the following day went with Captain Bonfoy, who was then commander of the Royal Yacht for Park-Gate, as the Captain said he would sail that afternoon:—here we were detained with several persons of fashion, who had been impatiently attending on the caprice of the wind. Mr. Hill, an elderly gentleman, Lord Macartney, Mr. Leeson, now Lord Milltown, and several others; we all went on board, but all returned as the wind continued obstinate. We all messed together; for Foote's company, as he was well acquainted with each, was the only treat that truly dreary place Park-Gate could afford. Our patience being exhausted, it was unanimously agreed, that we should proceed to Holyhead; horses were hired—this was early in November, and was not pleasing to me, who had never rode twenty miles on horseback in my life; however there was no alternative, as I was become a dependent traveller, and must submit to follow: I thought

we were all to have ſet off together—they went at ſeven o'clock in the morning, requeſting Foote's company at each houſe they ſtopped at; but Foote and myſelf remained behind, and on my aſking him the reaſon of his delay? he anſwered, that it was a rule of his, and worth my obſervation—that whenever he met with perſons of diſtinction and fortune on the road, travelling to ſmall inns, (as was, and is the caſe on the Welch roads) he made it a rule always to be half a day behind or before them; as, with all their politeneſs, they expected the beſt accommodations, or if they were ſo kind as to offer you a preference, you could not in policy or good manners accept ſuch an offer; therefore you never could on ſuch a journey be well ſuited or attended, unleſs by being the ſtage, at leaſt, before or after them; and if going to another inn, the landlady of the neglected houſe would pique herſelf on her behaviour, to convince her gueſts they had paid the compliment of preference not to her only, but for their own comfort and advantage.

I performed this journey on horſeback better than I expected, and was truly ſtruck with wonder on paſſing the ſtupendous mountains of Penmanmeaur and Penmenbough. Indeed Penmanmeaur then, not only from its aſtoniſhing height, but from its perilous and immediate drop into the

roaring deep, gave every idea of horror which the Poets pen could deſcribe. It is not ſo tremendous now, for though that mountain ſtill maintains its lofty head above the clouds, yet a tolerable road is at preſent cut for a carriage, which in 1757 was not; and inſtead of falling from the precipice into the deep, if your horſe ſtumbled, there is a friendly wall to ſecure you from ſuch imminent danger.—Holyhead in Wales, is about ninety-two miles from Weſt Cheſter; there we were detained again ſome days, and ſtrange but true, the high living with the perſons at that place, and a ſevere cold, had kept me ill in bed moſt part of that day; the wind changed, but it changed to a violent ſtorm——

Will Fortune never come with both hands full?

And at nine at night, all dark and diſmal, did we roll in the boat belonging to the Pacquet, over waves moſt dreary to behold; for the whiteneſs of the breakers ſhone double from the darkneſs of the night. When handed into the pacquet, I aſked for a bed; but they were all ſecured, not even one for Mr. Foote—as plenty of caſh from the great people, had made that requeſt impoſſible to be complied with. The cabin was wedged like the black-hole at Calcutta. The tumultuous moving of the ſhip ſoon made my

inquiries after a bed of down quite needleſs, for I ſunk on the boards, where my poverty bags were my only pillow, and there I lay toſſed in the moſt convulſive ſickneſs that can be imagined. I have ſeen many ſuffer by this ſea malady, but never I verily think, ſuch an object of commiſeration as myſelf: The ſtorm increaſed, but the wind was fair for Ireland—as to death, I was ſo truly ſick, that I was very indifferent whether I ſunk or ſwam. Mr. Foote was tolerably well, and walking moſt of the night from place to place.

Thank God, we arrived ſafe in Dublin Bay about twelve o'clock, and by one was taken in a Dunlarey hoy to Dublin Quay; a coach conveyed us to a tavern in College-Green, where we were regaled; I ſay we, though I continued very ſick and much out of order: Indeed my ſtomach was ever inflated, and diſturbed with a bilious complaint, which may be called hereditary; and that added to my irregular mode of living, and neglect of healthful exerciſe, ſhould make me thankful it has not yet entirely overthrown me. In about an hour Mr. Foote went to the lodgings provided for him, and left me to take care of myſelf. I inquired for a hotel, and was directed to one on Eſſex Quay, to which place I took coach; where, overpowered with illneſs, ſickneſs, and fatigue, I went to bed and lay till Monday noon,

but in a comfortleſs ſtate. I rung the bell for breakfaſt, but it did not afford relief; and about four o'clock in the afternoon, crawled to the houſe I remembered to have left the day before in College-Green, where I had ſome ſoup, chicken, and wine, and after ſitting full two hours, fancied myſelf better, owing to the momentary ſpirits the wine had given me. Paying for my repaſt, I inquired of the waiter where Mrs. Chaigneau lived? he replied, juſt over the way: This was agreeable intelligence, as indeed that was the family, the reader I hope will kindly recollect, I ſo particularly mentioned in the firſt part of my hiſtory—Then my fluttering heart hoped welcome to the poor, the orphan, and the ſtranger; next the apprehenſion of a rebuff occurred, but diſtreſs of ſituation puſhed me on, and to the houſe, as directed, I went.—When I advanced with trembling and tottering ſteps to the corner palace, and enquiring if Mrs. Chaigneau was at home? I was anſwered with an affirmative—I deſired the ſervant to acquaint his miſtreſs, that a perſon from England requeſted to ſpeak with her, and after waiting a few minutes (which my impatience doubled) a thin looking lady entered the room, but I could not recollect a feature, or any likeneſs to reſemble the form I expected to behold; but ſuppoſed time, or illneſs might have

made heavy inroads on the brittle frame—with the utmoſt agitation, I preſumed to inquire, if her name was Chaigneau? The lady anſwered—Yes. I then ventured to pronounce, Madam, I flatter myſelf you recollect me when you was in England; my name is Wilkinſon, ſon of the late Doctor Wilkinſon of the Savoy. She anſwered, indeed, Sir, you are miſtaken. This was a thunder ſtroke, as my fears interpreted it a wilful diſclaiming of her knowledge of me; but I was after a pauſe relieved by her looking ſerious and repeating to herſelf—Wilkinſon! Wilkinſon!—and ſuddenly ſaid, O, young gentleman! I beg your pardon; believe I can now clear up this miſtake, in which we both are at preſent involved—I have often heard your father and mother mentioned in terms of the higheſt regard by my brother and ſiſter Chaigneau—You, as a ſtranger, have made a miſtake as to the houſe; I am married to Mr. John Chaigneau, brother to Mr. William Chaigneau, and to whoſe houſe you have been wrongly directed—they live in Abbey-Street. I not knowing the way, ſhe requeſted her ſervant might call a coach for me, which was inſtantly done (as there was then, and always is a ſtand of coaches in College-Green). I took my leave—apologized for the trouble I had given, was drove to Abbey Street, and on my road over Eſſex Bridge was

vaſtly pleaſed at ſeeing the number of lamps, ſedan chairs, carriages, hackney coaches, footmen with flambeaux, &c. as it appeared to reſemble another London. When arrived at Abbey Street, and the awful rap was given, I was, not only from frequent misfortunes and diſappointments all flutter, but found myſelf not well; yet I gave myſelf the comfort to attribute it to fancied illneſs, proceeding from anxiety, diſtreſs, and unaccuſtomed fatigue; and therefore hoped it would go off. The firſt anſwer to my inquiry at Mr. William Chaigneau's door from the ſervant was, that he could not tell whether either his maſter or miſtreſs were at home or not, but would go and ſee; he ſoon returned with an anſwer more potent than the firſt. That they were both at home, and what was more fortunate, they were without company. I had no ſooner entered the room where they were ſitting, then—then what?—why to proceed requires the *beſt* of novel pens to preſent, fulfil, and do ſervice to the ſcene that followed. This generous Mr. William Chaigneau and wife, were on the liſt of the few inſtances, where

> Mutual temper with unclouded ray,
> Could make to morrow welcome as to day.

Their pleaſures were the ſame—their affections were the ſame. Their inſtantaneous recollection

of me—the great intimacy between the families—my father's death and calamities being so lately public, and now refreshed to their memory, revived the idea of their own distress, from the loss of their darling child, the infant-marriage between me and that daughter, my present assured, unfortunate, helpless, situation, with a look of desponding hope dependent on their feelings, all collected rushed on their alternate sudden thoughts with such quick transitions, as made them all combined too mighty for Mrs. Chaigneau's tender spirits; indeed so powerfully, that the fictitious distress of Lady Randolph on the stage, was by no means equal to her poignant sense of my misery and situation; and it was actually sometime before she could recover herself with any degree of composure to inquire what had brought me there, or what could be done to serve me. Mr. Chaigneau was also greatly agitated; but not to so extravagant a degree as my good benefactress, as she afterwards proved to the utmost extent. After a little composure, and my full relation of what had happened to my mother and myself, since the fatal marriage act passed, a comfortable supper was set on the table. After which pleasing ceremony, they assured me, that every exertion in their power, and all their friends and connexions, I might as much depend

upon as if the welfare of their own ſon, was the perſon, whoſe intereſt they were to plead for.

During a ſhort interval I felt elated beyond myſelf, the tranſition was ſo wonderful; but alas! how fleeting are human joys as to pain, hope, or ſorrow: For ſoon after this pleaſing unforeſeen ſenſation of rapture, I ſuddenly ſunk into an heavy feveriſh languor, not in my power to uphold. Mrs. Chaigneau exclaimed, "My God! Tate is ill!" Her words were prophetic—I wiſhed and tried to ſhake it off, but all in vain;—diſorder and delirium grew too powerful, my head felt dreadfully deranged. My real friends, in every ſenſe of the word, were alarmed; Mrs. Chaigneau declared ſhe could not permit me by any means to return to the hotel, in ſuch a ſtate of apparent illneſs as I then ſeemed to labour under: They ſent to the next door, engaged a comfortable lodging for me, and provided me with hock-wine, whey, and ſuch accommodations as they thought immediately neceſſary. The enſuing day, inſtead of finding myſelf relieved, I was ſeized moſt dangerouſly by an outrageous miliary fever. I had, from their wonderful attention and regard, the attendance of one of the firſt phyſicians then in Dublin, (Doctor Lucas) and their own apothecary, with a conſtant careful nurſe. Mrs. Chaigneau preferred waiting on Tate to the luxury of

company. She, and her couſin Mrs. Carty, during the day were ſeldom from my bedſide. A ſtranger to have ſeen Mrs. Chaigneau weeping over me, muſt have ſuppoſed it her own dying ſon ſhe was lamenting: I have often heard her repeat, that except the death of her dearly beloved daughter, ſhe never ſuffered ſuch diſtreſs, and ſaid it awakened ſo ſtrongly the remembrance of the ſudden loſs of her only child (ever by her to be lamented) that it excited her feelings beyond the power of reſtraining them, and recollection brought freſh to her memory her long intimacy with my worthy mother; and knowing her life of almoſt perpetual ſorrow, by affliction heaped on affliction, and viewing in every light my helpleſs ſituation, theſe all conjoined was too much for her ſpirits to ſupport.

In that outrageous fever did I continue, and in a truly lamentable ſtate, with a complication of diſtraction and agony for near three weeks; bliſters on my ancles, and every phyſical torture to increaſe my miſeries. Mr. Chaigneau often uſed to joke and ſay, what an expenſive gueſt I was to him for his old hock; the quantity I drank in whey, by his account, was incredible. However Providence, aiding my youth, brought me once more into the world; and here I muſt not omit my ſincere and grateful acknowledgments to God.

For, good reader, will you believe it, that all this time of my fevere ſuffering, notwithſtanding Mr. Foote muſt have heard I had left the hotel and tavern with evident marks of indiſpoſition, he never once (to the diſgrace of Chriſtianity be it aſſerted!) made inquiry whether I was living or dead; or if living, whether I had decent neceſſaries: and with regret I am obliged to relate that, had I been left dependent on his care, though ſuch an object of compaſſion, I had never from the dictates of his feelings or pity, his honeſty, or honour, ſurvived to give this relation of my illneſs; and I ſhould have remained for him, truly deſtitute, having no mother or friend that he knew of in Ireland to cloſe my eyes; but God raiſed me friends, therefore I have indeed reaſon to rejoice and praiſe my Maker.

Before I was able to go abroad, or even to leave my apartment, I ſent my compliments to Mr. Foote, to acquaint him where I was; for Mr. and Mrs. Chaigneau were ſo offended at ſuch brutality of behaviour towards me, that neither of them had given him any intelligence concerning me. Mr. Foote on my information, waited on Mr. Chaigneau, and by way of apology, ſaid he could not ſee me for three or four days for fear of catching the infection from the fever—profeſſed himſelf anxious to ſupply my wants, which he

was informed was at that time quite unneceſſary. After that he waited on me as my moſt *anxious* friend—and in about three weeks I recovered ſo faſt, by the help of my good nurſes, that I dined every day with my preſerving angels at the next door; was attended every noon with jellies, &c. and what was more extraordinary, had my chariot every morning at the door to take my daily airing.—O gemini! a coach!

> The ſcene was changed——
> Was alter'd quite.

And indeed it was as ſudden and unexpected a metamorphoſe, as that of the Cobbler's Wife in the Devil to Pay.

As ſoon as I was able to be taken by my patrons a viſiting, an elegant ſuit of clothes was provided for me, that I might be a credit, and *not* by my thread-bare appearance diſgrace either my friends or myſelf. Mr. and Mrs. Chaigneau introduced me to all their acquaintance; nor could they be pleaſed more, than by any act of kindneſs that was beſtowed on me. Their connections were particularly numerous, Mr. William Chaigneau being principal agent to moſt of the regiments on the Iriſh eſtabliſhment, and was conſequently univerſally known, and likewiſe reſpected.

All the families in Ireland, with whom my father and mother had formerly been intimate in

London, proved by innumerable acts of generosity and true zeal for my welfare, that friendship is sometimes more than a name. Their deeds and actions to me, gave full evidence of their partiality, nor do I in this account deceive the reader with the smallest particle that is erroneous, for there are those that are living, who can attest it minutely: Yet, were I now to land in this said Dublin where I was thirty-two years ago universally acquainted, the theatres excepted, I do not know one house I could with propriety approach!—Such quick and certain havock does that said voracious monster Death make with mankind. On my visiting abroad, I was soon invited to Lord Forbes's in Stephen's Green, also to the Kellys, Alderman and Mrs. Forbes, Achesons, Callages, John Chaigneau's, Coates's, Hamiltons, &c. and received particular favours from those persons, as well as from Lord Clambrasil, Lord Bellamont, Lord Milltown, Mr. Hill, Miss Knoxes, &c. &c. At each of the above families, in the full meaning of the word, I had a home, and I never received a cool look unless for staying away, though a favour may be bestowed with an ill grace; and I will beg leave here to give an instance. Lord Forbes I had been used to see frequently in London, even from the time of my wearing frocks; and I am certain his invitations in Dublin

were intended moſt friendly, and his will was ever to ſerve me; but one day on dining with his Lordſhip, when ſeveral perſons of quality were invited—the bottle, our ſun of the table, after dinner moved quickly round, and as the wine circulated, not feeling any reſtraint, and his Lordſhip not being a ſtranger to me, I very heartily ſmacked my lips, and ſaid, "O my Lord, this is excellent wine!" On which he pauſed, and looking full at me, (by which means he drew the attention of the whole company) ſaid, with a ſatirical ſmile, "Pray, Tate, what, or who has made you a judge of wine? Never give your judgement in company as to wine; for in a young man like you it is not becoming or proper." This effectually ſilenced me; nay, it did worſe than that, for it made me feel my inferiority, and I was abaſhed and unhappy till releaſed that evening from the company of the great, and which two hours before had greatly elated me. Nor do I think it excuſable in any rank whatever, by any ſpeech or look, to leſſen the gueſt invited in the preſence of others; for bread and cheeſe at home is preferable, though the dependent's dinner may be termed an honour—From ſuch honour, with *ſuch behaviour*, heaven defend me!—That Lord Forbes had a more than common right to give his free ſentiments to me, is cer-

tain, and beyond doubt meant it well, is as certain; but time and place in many things make such material difference, as the same actions suit not all men alike: for had his Lordship privately reprimanded me it would have been an obligation; but in the manner he did it—I to this moment think it was cruel and ill bred. It made such an impression that, notwithstanding after that I had a general invitation from him, which I could not from duty and policy avoid accepting yet I always wished the hour of visiting his Lordship was over.

This leads me to a like anecdote, which suddenly and impulsively bursts on my recollection: A first esteemed gentleman in the spacious county of York, whose polished understanding and manners were universally acknowledged and admired, even to the extent of popularity in the great world, some few years since desired to patronise a play. I sent my treasurer with the catalogue (as is usual on such occasions to any leading person); but on looking over the list of tragedies, comedies, and farces, he declared he could not determine, and desired Mr. Wilkinson would attend him and his party after dinner, at the inn where he then for a few days resided. Which mandate I obeyed; and without being arrogant, in my idea, (as his Majesty's patentee) undoubtedly expected being favoured with sitting at the cheerful

board, and holding ſome chit chat, relative to the play and farce that he intended to ſanction. Inſtead of ſuch uſual, and indeed common civility, after waiting a conſiderable time in the bar, I was at length uſhered into the room where the company had dined, when Sir ——— ———, beckoned me to approach him at the upper end of the table, where I impertinently expected to have ſat down; but neither found a vacancy, or the waiter even ordered to produce me a chair. Sir ——— ——— diſcourſed relative to the play—then of York city; graciouſly obſerved I had acted Bayes, ſo as to merit his approbation; and to heighten the compliment remarked, he was no judge, as he ſeldom viſited the theatre, either in London or elſewhere. At length he condeſcendingly aſked me to drink a glaſs of wine, which I begged to decline; but he requeſted a worthy and reſpectable gentleman, (now living) to give a glaſs, the which he handed as if I had been a common porter waiting for a meſſage: For I actually ſtood all the while at the backs of their chairs. I was moſt truly happy to depart, and from that day loſt all anxiety or ray of inclination to pay my devoirs, or wait on that great man, who was then termed the *Grandiſon* of the age.

I would attribute this to want of thought at the time; but I do not ſee how that could be the

caſe for ſo long a ſpace, where ſenſe and good breeding were by all allowed to be the characteriſtic qualities of that gentleman. I am aware, I ſhall be blamed by particular perſons for mentioning the above; but in order to diſarm *unfair* anger—five minutes pauſe, and a little allowance may ſave my condemnation. If I reſtrained myſelf from relating little matters, which have pleaſed or vexed me—I ſhould by ſuch a rule, be deprived of the liberty of expreſſing my thoughts when differently affected. I dare ſay, although it is a fact which I have related, it will be argued it might have been omitted? I ſubſcribe to that opinion; but then let every feeling mind conſider, that if I am allowed the freedom to expreſs my being hurt by a perſon of quality in Ireland, and to whom I was ſo greatly obliged, I certainly, have a right to mention the other in England: for, unleſs reſpect due to his rank and character, obligations I had none; and in concluſion it was only a ſpeck upon Ermine.

But his preſent Grace the Duke of Norfolk's behaviour to me is as great a contraſt. I could fill a volume with encomiums, but that would offend him—and he is ſo univerſally known and beloved, that what I could ſay would be only ſuperfluous.

"To grace a title that was rich before,
"To gild refined gold,
"Is waſteful and ridiculous exceſs."

His Grace of Norfolk is plain in his attire, poſſeſſes wit, accompanied with infinite underſtanding, that leads his natural temper, which is gracious and condeſcending, in his manner friendly and honourable, and is ever endeavouring to promote the cheerfulneſs and happineſs of others: Yet let not that eaſy manner betray Ignorance into the error of being too familiar; for though his Grace's ſtrong ſenſe and good nature may ſmile and pardon, yet that perſon will find himſelf egregiouſly wrong who ſuppoſes that the firſt of his Majeſty's ſubjects in the kingdom of Great Britain *ever* forgets *he is the Duke of Norfolk:* Therefore let inferiors, out of regard to themſelves, bridle their familiarity, and always remember, that every deference is juſtly due.

Permit my Lord Duke to ſink his own rank, to render himſelf ſtill more agreeable, and beſtow heartfelt joy at the ſprightly board; but, Ignorance! beware of too much encroachment, leſt ſuch impolicy incur his ſecret contempt, and, like Macbeth's vaulting ambition, you o'erleap yourſelf, and fall on the other ſide. To thoſe who are honoured with the acquaintance of his Grace of Norfolk, or to thoſe who are ſtrangers, I would pourtray my ideas of that nobleman in the words of Home: That,

——————————In his eye
Sits Obſervation; in each glance of thought
Deciſion follows, as the thunderbolt
Purſues the flaſh.

But having carried myſelf into Yorkſhire, as I love travelling let me now return to my ſtation in Dublin. Near Chriſtmas I began to think of making my appearance on the ſtage—Mr. Chaigneau invited Mr. Sheridan the manager, Mr. Victor, and Mr. Foote to dinner. Mr. Foote's time of acting drew near an expiration; he had played Cadwallader, in particular, with great ſucceſs, Lord Foppington, Sir Paul Plyant, Bayes, Fondlewife, Buck, &c. He ſaid to Mr. Chaigneau, at dinner, that he thought it neceſſary for Mr. Wilkinſon to make his appearance on the Dublin ſtage before he departed, all joined in the ſame opinion. Mr. Chaigneau wiſhed me to ſee the theatre; Mr. Victor was to dine with him the next day in a family-way, and to take me there—Mr. Sheridan was all politeneſs. The firſt play I ſaw was in the lattices with Mr. Victor, which lattices are what is called in London, the green-boxes; the play was the Recruiting Officer—Mr. Ryder's firſt appearance in that kingdom, in the character of Captain Plume; he has ſince given univerſal ſatisfaction, both as manager and actor in Ireland, and his merit is now well known and

confirmed in England. Foote acted Brazen; Isaac Sparks, Kite; Sylvia, by a Miss Kennedy, who soon retired well provided for by the generosity of Mr. L. Gardener.

It was appointed for me to appear the Monday following in Mr. Foote's *Tea*, in the character of a pupil, under Mr. Puzzle, the supposed director of a rehearsal.—Mr. Puzzle, by Mr. Foote. He sent me a part called Bounce, but which I begged, as the time was so short, to decline; and, as I did not attend any rehearsal, it was agreed that I should appear as Mr. Wilkinson (his pupil) when called upon, and repeat just what I could select to please myself—not any regular character.

When the night came, Lord Forbes, Mr. Chaigneau, and all my friends, went to encourage and support me, and engaged all they knew for the same purpose. One lucky circumstance was, my not being known as a performer, therefore I had their wishes and pity in a high degree—but great fear of my not being able to succeed. The story of my distressed situation—the blazoned marriage-act—my being a young gentleman—my illness, &c. &c. were become topics of public conversation: As to intelligence, requested by critics from the players relative to myself, they neither did nor could pronounce, with knowledge, either good or ill. But I will rather suppose five out of six spoke

to my diſadvantage, from the too general depravity of human nature; as perſons liſten to ſatire rather than praiſe: It is more deſcriptive, diſplays the tripping tongue, and ſuits converſation much better; it gives energy to the informant, and quick ears to the languid.—The bill ran thus:

After the PLAY

Mr. FOOTE will give TEA.

Mr. PUZZLE (the Inſtructor) Mr. FOOTE.

Firſt PUPIL, by a YOUNG GENTLEMAN,

(Who never appeared on any Stage before.)

By eight in the evening I was in full dreſs behind the ſcenes; I had never been there before; the company were all ſtrangers to me. I not knowing how to enter into converſation with the performers, and being announced as a pupil of Mr. Foote's, I did not receive any civility from them; for, if I was a blockhead, I was not worth their notice; and if an impudent imitator or mimic of their profeſſion, bred by Mr. Foote in the ſame worthy art, I was, in their opinions, a deſpicable intruder. I could conceive all this, and certainly my ſituation on this critical night was not to be envied, as their ſentiments, though not avowed, were the reſult of nature. I, on reflection, ſoon grew weary of my ſolitary ſeat in the green-

room; alone in a crowd; and between the play and farce looked through a hole in the curtain, and beheld an awful pleaſing ſight—a crowded, ſplendid audience—ſuch as might ſtrike the boldeſt with diſmay.

The farce began, and Mr. Foote gained great applauſe, and roars of laughter ſucceeded. In the ſecond act my time of trial drew near; in about ten minutes I was called——"Mr. Wilkinſon! Mr. Wilkinſon!"——Had I obeyed a natural impulſe, I was really ſo alarmed that I ſhould have run away. But honour pricked me on—there was no alternative—my brain was a chaos; but on I went, and muſt have made a very ſheepiſh, timid appearance, as from fear, late illneſs, and apprehenſion, I trembled like a frighted clown in a pantomime: which Foote perceiving, good naturedly took me by the hand and led me forward; when the burſt of applauſe was wonderful, and apparently that of kindneſs and true benevolence; but it could not inſtantly remove my timidity; and I had no prompter to truſt to, as all depended on myſelf.

Foote perceiving I was not fit for action, ſaid to his two friends on the ſtage (ſeated like Smith and Johnſon in the Rehearſal) "This young gentleman is merely a novice on the ſtage; he has not yet been properly drilled. But come, my

young friend, walk acroſs the ſtage; breathe yourſelf, and ſhew your figure." I did ſo; the walk encouraged me, and another loud applauſe ſucceeded. I felt a glow, which ſeemed to ſay, "What have you to fear! Now, or *never*.—This is the night that either makes you or undoes you quite." And on the applauſe being repeated, I ſaid to myſelf, that is as loud as any I have heard given to Mr. Garrick; I muſtered up courage, and began with Mr. Luke Sparks of London, (brother to Iſaac Sparks, then in Dublin) in the character of Capulet: Moſt of the gentlemen in the boxes knew all the London players, and no play in London was ſo familiar then as Romeo and Juliet: They were univerſally ſtruck with the forcible manner of the ſpeaking, and the ſtriking reſemblance of the features; a particular excellence in my mode of mimicry. A gentleman cried out, "Sparks of London! Sparks of London!" The applauſe reſounded, even to my aſtoniſhment; and the audience were equally amazed, as they found *ſomething*, where they in fact expected *nothing*. Next ſpeech was their favourite Barry in Alexander; univerſally known, and as univerſally felt. I now found myſelf vaſtly elated and clever: Fear was vaniſhed, and joy and pleaſure ſucceeded; a proof what barometers we are! how ſoon elated, and how ſoon

depreſſed!—When quite at eaſe, I began with Mrs. Woffington in Lady Macbeth, and Barry in Macbeth. The laughter (which is the ſtrongeſt applauſe on a *comic* occaſion) was ſo loud and inceſſant, that I could not proceed: This was a minute of luxury; I was then in the region of bliſs; I was encored; yet that lady had declared in London, on hearing I was to go with Foote to Ireland,—"Take me off! a puppy!—If he dare attempt it, by the living G—d he will be ſtoned to death." Here the lady was miſtaken; for, on repeating the part, the ſecond applauſe was ſtronger than the preceding. A ſudden thought occurred; I felt all hardy—all alert—all nerve—and immediately advanced ſix ſteps; and, before I ſpoke, I received the full teſtimony of "true imitation!" My maſter, as he was called, ſat on the ſtage at the ſame time; I repeated twelve or fourteen lines of the very prologue he had ſpoke that night (being called for) to the Author, and he had almoſt every night repeated: I before Mr. Foote preſented his other ſelf; the audience from repetition were as perfect as I was; his manner, his voice, his oddities, I ſo exactly hit, that the pleaſure, the glee it gave, may eaſily be conceived, to ſee and hear the mimic mimicked, and it really gave me a complete victory over Mr. Foote; for the ſuddenneſs of the action tripped up his

audacity so much, that he, with all his effrontery, sat foolish, wishing to appear equally pleased with the audience, but knew not how to play that difficult part: he was unprepared; the surprise and satisfaction was such, that, without any conclusion, the curtain was obliged to drop with reiterated bursts of applause. They are remarkable in Dublin, *when pleased*, to continue applauding till the curtain falls, often not suffering the play to finish. This was a compliment frequently paid to Mr. Sheridan.

Foote once said to that gentleman, very seriously, "My dear Sheridan, I wish you would relieve yourself of a great deal of labour and trouble!"

"In what manner?" says Sheridan, "do inform me, and I shall be obliged to you."

"Why," says Foote, "instead of Richard the Third, act King Henry in that tragedy."

"Good God, Mr. Foote! why should I relinquish Richard, where you are a witness I get such universal applause?—Give me your reason."

"O!" says Foote, "the best reason in the world; for if you will perform Henry instead of Richard, the play will finish in the first act, and the players may all go home in good time to supper."

When the farce, called Tea, was concluded, I had great congratulations paid seriously and ironically. Mr. Foote affected to be vastly pleased,

but in truth it was merely affectation, so differently do we feel for ourselves when ridicule is pointed at us; but he said, it was perfectly well judged to make free with him, yet he did not think it very like himself, for it certainly was my *worst* imitation, but he rejoiced at my good fortune. In truth, Mr. Foote got the cash, not me; what I did was for him, as he acted on shares; and the fuller the house, the greater was his profit. He was piqued and chagrined; but as he had kept within no bounds himself, and made free with all characters whatever, stage, pulpit, bar, public and private peculiarities, benefactors, patrons, friends as well as foes, he could not, with any degree of sense, appear displeased, or censure me for what I had done, but kept his resentment locked up for a more proper and convenient opportunity, as he considered the repetition of himself, in my imitations, was to his advantage, by the evident partiality the public had shewn me; he made himself, therefore, tolerably easy, and may be truly said to have *pocketted* the affront.

The conversation the next day, particularly of all my eager partial friends, was an universal cry of "Foote outdone! Foote outdone! the pupil the master!" and this was greatly assisted by their agreeable disappointment; for I do not believe any one of them, however warm they might have

been in their wiſhes for my welfare, but trembled for the event; they felt unhappy leſt I ſhould make a deſpicable attempt, and be univerſally diſapproved; and then reflected within themſelves, "Good Heaven! what is to become of this poor youth? what can he do for a ſubſiſtence?" After my performance, from the ſucceſs I had met with, I could neither eat, drink, or ſleep, that night; pleaſant dreams I needed not; my waking thoughts were ſo much ſuperior.

The *Tea* was acted in regular ſucceſſion ſeveral nights, nay, it was commanded by the Duke and Ducheſs of Bedford; his Grace was at that time Lord Lieutenant.

The *Rehearſal* was repeated, in which I performed the Princeſs Chloris. Being well dreſſed, my likeneſs and ſerious acting *alamode* Woffington, procured me great applauſe, though in ſo trifling a part. Let it be here conſidered that the imitation was univerſally felt above and below, as Mrs. Woffington had played three years in Dublin; her ſalary not leſs than 800*l. per* ſeaſon, and two benefits. She was alſo very conſpicuous at the head of the court party, with which ſhe had certainly no buſineſs to interfere; but, as Scrub ſays, "It muſt be a plot, becauſe there was a woman in it;" and that party increaſed the heat of the patriots, and in the end, though it made her

more public, it all ended in the deſtruction of the theatre, and the baniſhment of the manager, who relied on ſomething better, and ſecretly expected from courtiers' promiſes that his greatneſs would riſe from his deſtruction.—But plays (without his own learning) might have taught him better.—Alas! who wants not teaching?

Mrs Woffington being ſo well known to all ranks and degrees, was of infinite aſſiſtance to me as an imitator. After the firſt night of my performance, Mr. Sheridan appointed me a ſalary of three guineas per week, and requeſted, with my approbation, (which was readily obtained) that Mr. Foote would write to Mr. Garrick to grant permiſſion for my continuance in Dublin till the end of February. Foote was obliged to go to England with all ſpeed, as he had ſtaid beyond his time; but I was left behind, waiting for Mr. Garrick's anſwer to Mr. Sheridan's requeſt, but which ſoon arrived, and granted the petition requeſted by Mr. Foote.

Before January expired, I played Cadwallader, ſpoke the prologue, and acted Othello with much applauſe and credit to myſelf, the latter was certainly a very bold attempt; for, by the bye, Barry had performed that, his favourite character, repeatedly two winters before, Mr. King performed Iago, and Miſs G. Philips (Mrs. Jordan's mother) Deſdemona. Here it would be

unjuſt and ungrateful in me not to reflect with pleaſure on the great civilities and kindneſſes which I received from Mr. and Mrs. King in that early ſtage of life. There are different kinds of memories; a good memory, a bad memory, and a convenient memory. What I am going to re-relate requires a bad memory, as not proper to be retained; but I inſert it to pleaſe myſelf; and being a *ſweet* ſtory, will with it refreſh the memory of my friend Mr. King.

This ſaid Mr. Thomas King had ſet his heart on well preparing a new pantomime, in order to give his manager (Mr. Sheridan) a lift, and it was advertiſed for the Thurſday, but it was not fit for preparation on the Wedneſday. It was called the Whim, or Harlequin Villager. As Mr. King is, and ever was, indefatigable, he was determined to be at the theatre the whole Wedneſday night, that he might be a ſpur to induſtry, and obſerve, that the painters, carpenters, &c. were ſtrictly at their duty; and to make the time paſs more pleaſantly in his dreary manſion, (for a large theatre certainly is ſo, when only lighted with three or four pieces of candle, and being a ſpot where murders of various kinds are weekly committed, and where ghoſts undoubtedly are known to ſtalk) he therefore, to cheer his ſpirits, deſired Mrs. King and myſelf to be with him

in the green-room; we agreed, but I made it conditional, which was, provided we had ſomething to eat as well as to drink, as mutton-chops or beef-ſteaks. He aſſented, and Mrs. King agreed to cook them, and I was to aſſiſt her. About ten o'clock, wine, rum, and oranges, entered the room, and the mutton-chops, properly ſprinkled with pepper and ſalt, were placed in order on the well-rubbed gridiron, which a ſervant ſet cloſe to the fender, waiting for further orders. I complained of cold, and the only ſeat in the green-room was, as uſual, benched round, and immoveable. Chairs were called for—two were immediately brought—I anſwered for procuring a third for myſelf—and recollecting Mrs. Fitzhenry's dreſſing apartment was adjoining to the green-room, where I had ſeen an elbow-chair, and Mrs. Fitzhenry as Hermione ſitting in her royal robes, I went in the dark, ſeized the chair by the elbows, but when I brought it near the fire-ſide, by a ſudden jerk off flew the bottom, and, O ye powers! by the violence of the ſhock, the regalia, the treaſures of Queen Elizabeth and Cleopatra ruſhed like a golden tide over our mutton-chops and bright gridiron. Reader, turn the leaf and gueſs the reſt, or do not gueſs at all, juſt which ſuits your fancy. However, for one hour it cured all complaints of cold or hunger. While we retired, the ſervants of the the-

atre had the disagreeable trouble to assist to put the room in order, which indeed required some patience and care to accomplish. When the stable was cleansed, eating was out of the question; we had an excellent bowl of punch, which proved salutary, palatable, and restored us to harmony, and we passed two or three very cheerful friendly hours.

Early in February I received the following letter from my mother; it may not be thought worthy attention to readers in general, but every parent will be pleased with the genuine language of Nature. I shall therefore occasionally introduce a few letters as they occurred from a pattern of parental goodness.

To Mr. WILKINSON, *Abbey-street, Dublin.*

MY DEAR TATE,

"I reckoned every day and hour until I heard "how you got over so daring a part as that of "Othello is said to be, which, by the information "of yesterday's letter from Ireland, I find you "have executed beyond my expectation. My "wishes for all the joy, pleasure, and advantage "in that way of life, with unsullied reputation, "you may be assured of; with the same from "Mr. Townsend's, where the account of this "great character was as impatiently wished for as "by myself. It gives me great pleasure to hear

" you are looked upon as ſo conſiderable a perſon " in Dublin; and am of your opinion, that in " all reſpects you will never find the ſtage again ſo " much ſuited to your own humour.

" I dined yeſterday in Dean-ſtreet, with Lady " Forbes, the two Miſs Wilſons there, and " the Captain juſt come home: We had a " very good dinner, and were all in good hu- " mour, and very merry. I got home by day to " meet your letter; then to Mrs. Townſend's " with the contents.

" You don't ſay one word of Mr. and Mrs. " Chaigneau, nor the Kellys. I take for granted " they are all well, and went to ſee Othello. The " houſe at Covent Garden is quite forſaken, " and Rich gives away his box tickets by the " dozen.

" Mrs. Davis has wrote, that ſhe will ſend " ſnuff by you to Lady Forbes. I would have " you pay your reſpects there, now and then, " as I believe his Lordſhip to be what he profeſſes. " Beg you would preſent my moſt ſincere and " grateful reſpects in Abbey-ſtreet; wiſhing a long " continuance of good ſpirits, and laſting ſatis- " faction,

" I am, your moſt affectionate mother,

" G. WILKINSON."

London, January 28, 1758.

P. S. An IMPROMPTU, by Miſs JONES,

Upon hearing that you played the part of Cadwallader, *in the ſtyle of* FOOTE, *who was then acting the ſame part at Drury-Lane.*

" ONE night when ſleepleſs in my bed,
Garrick ran ſtrangely in my head;
His legs ſo handſome—tho' they're ſhort
The man's juſt form'd for play and ſport.
Hear a new wonder in his praiſe,
Beyond a Lear or matchleſs Bayes.
Wide is the ſpace by ſea and land
From Drury's Houſe to Dublin's Strand.
Yet in one inſtant I'll engage
A FOOT he'll place upon each ſtage."

It had not at this time been uſual to have plays acted on Saturday nights, as they never had turned out beneficial or faſhionable, though put into practice, when Woodward and Barry opened at Crow-ſtreet, and from uſe ſoon became as good a night as any other for the manager, but not I believe to this day as a benefit.—The prevalence of cuſtom is aſtoniſhing—a Lady in London will go to a known bad opera on the Saturday, and though ſhe profeſſes being an amateur in muſic will not go on the Tueſday, though a good opera, becauſe it *is* Tueſday. A Lady will go to the theatre at Edinburgh, Bath, and York, though to the moſt indifferent play, and as indifferently

acted, on the Saturday, *because* it is Saturday; yet the beſt acted comedy ſhall be offered to the public, at either of thoſe three theatres, on any other night, and be totally neglected, unleſs it is hinted that the night is to be faſhionable, which alters the caſe. At Hull, the houſe would not even be a decent one, to whatever play might be performed, if it *was* a Saturday, unleſs the faſhion. At Doncaſter and Wakefield, there is not any material diſtinction as to nights.

I am led to theſe obſervations, by recollecting, when in Dublin, on this my firſt excurſion, I judged it neceſſary, early in February, to wait upon Mr. Sheridan, in order to appoint a night for my benefit, which had been ſtipulated to be in that month, in conſequence of my continuing with him. Mr. Sheridan obſerved, that my being a young man and a ſtranger, it could never anſwer for me, to venture on the expences of the theatre, the charge being forty pounds (but at preſent, ſixty or ſeventy pounds per night). But he had an expedient to ſerve me more effectually, which was, to permit me the privilege of diſpoſing of tickets, dividing the ſum taken for thoſe tickets between us; and he would himſelf play, and ſecure its being ſerviceable to me. In fact, this ſecret ſervice of his playing, he thought would make my ſtrenuous friends pour in tickets, and he

reap great advantage by them; and by his playing, (a great favour on a benefit) make himself appear in an advantageous light, and as generous, humane, and full of pity.—His throne again *threatening* the neceſſity of a ſecond abdication from the towering walls of Crow-Street, *in terrorem* daily rearing their lofty heads in ſtately defiance.

To this act of liberality I objected, and with ſome degree of ſpirit, abided by my expreſs engagement, though *verbal*, and referred him to the opinion of my friends. He now plainly perceived this would make him appear in a mercenary and mean light, therefore he gave up the point; but at the ſame time obſerved, Mr. Wilkinſon I cannot give you a night in February, unleſs you will take a Saturday; and to this propoſal, from neceſſity, I conſented. That article being ſettled, he complained that I was not ſtudied in farce parts, to be of ſervice to him, (which indeed was true); and further obſerved, that inſtead of the performers, whom I had taken the liberty to bring into company where they were not, he judged it would have a better effect, if I would exhibit the manners of the performers where they actually were, and introduce imitations of ſuch as were at that very time acting in Dublin. I obſerved to him, that I had not had leiſure to have paid a ſufficient

attention to that company, as objects for imitation; it could not be the work of a week, or a month; besides, were I capable, if I should take that freedom, they would most likely not only insult me, but make it a plea to refuse acting for my benefit. That argument seemed with Mr. Sheridan, to have but little weight; he persisted angrily. I then intimated, that if I complied, I hoped he would not have any objection to my using his name, and that I did not do it of my own accord, but had his express command for that purpose; and further urged, Surely, Sir, will they not think it unkind of the manager, that he should order a satirical performance on them, which they must feel and term a cruelty in their governor to inflict? Mr. Sheridan seemed much vexed; said, that what he had asked me to do, was to get me applause, and to serve *me*—not *himself*; but he should by no means consent to my exposing the peculiarities of his actors and actresses, under the sanction of his desire and approbation; he wished it to come before the audience as a sudden surprise, and as my own voluntary act, and after that had been done, he would have taken care to have had it so called for by the audience, as to prevent a possibility of the performers' anger, being of weight sufficient to prevent its repetition; and the more it vexed the actors and actresses, the greater

reliſh it would give the audience; that I believe was too true.

However, I continued my objection, but at laſt (like a fool in the knowledge of mankind and the human heart) a lucky bright thought, as I judged it, occurred to me; and I ſaid, my good Mr. Sheridan, I have hit upon the very thing to eſtabliſh myſelf as a favourite with you, and the town. He ſeemed all impatience to know what it could be. My dear Sir, a thought has juſt entered my pate, which I think will draw money, and be of infinite ſervice to myſelf. What is it! What is it! ſays Sheridan, with the utmoſt eagerneſs.—Why, Sir, ſays I, your rank in the theatre, and a gentleman ſo well known in Dublin, on and off the ſtage, muſt naturally occaſion any ſtriking imitation of yourſelf, to have a wonderful effect. I have paid great attention to your whole mode of acting, not only ſince I have been in Dublin; but two years before, when you played the whole ſeaſon at Covent-Garden theatre; and do actually think, I can do a great deal on your ſtage with you *alone*, without interfering with any other actor's manner whatever.

Hogarth's pencil could not teſtify more aſtoniſhment—he turned pale and red alternately—his lips quivered.—I inſtantaneouſly perceived I was in the wrong box; it was ſome time before he could

ſpeak—he took a candle from off the table, and ſhewing me the room door—when at laſt his words found utterance—ſaid, he never was ſo inſulted, What! to be taken off by a buffoon upon his own ſtage! And as to mimicry, what is it? Why, a proceeding which he never could countenance; that he even deſpiſed Garrick and Foote, for having introduced ſo mean an art; and he then very politely deſired me to walk down ſtairs. This was truly on the ſecond, not the firſt floor, it being more convenient for his communication with the theatre, from that part of his dwelling houſe. I was obliged to march, and really felt petrified with my bright thought, which had turned out ſo contrary from what I had ignorantly expected. Mr. Sheridan held the candle for me only till I got to the firſt landing, and then haſtily removed it, grumbling and ſqueaking to himſelf, and leaving me to feel my way in the dark, down a pair and a half of ſteep ſtairs, and to gueſs my road in hopes of finding the ſtreet door.

Mr. Sheridan's voice was deep, and as oppoſitely ſharp; and I ſhould not have diſliked then to have put in practice what I propoſed, had he given leave; for I was really perfect and ready. To a reader, this may appear inſipid, but any perſon who can well recollect Mr. Sheridan's manner,

would be entertained to hear me in the proper vein relate it, as much depends on that; for there is a great deal in being in ſpirits.

After that fracas he neither permitted me to play; or ſpoke to me during my ſtay in Ireland, (my own night excepted). I fixed on Jane Shore and Tom Thumb, for my play and farce, on the night allotted me, Saturday, February 25, 1758.

Mr. Chaigneau himſelf waited on Mrs. Fitzhenry to requeſt her powerful aſſiſtance in Alicia, to which requeſt ſhe kindly aſſented. Haſtings, by Mr. Wilkinſon; Shore, by Mr. Dexter; —Jane Shore, by Miſs Philips; Alicia, by Mrs. Fitzhenry; Queen Dollalolla, by Mr. Wilkinſon; Huncamunca, by Miſs G. Philips.

At the bottom of the bill, tickets were to be had of Mr. Wilkinſon, at *his houſe* in Big Strand Street; for be it known, that in three or four weeks after my recovering from my illneſs, when in Abbey-Street, my good cheer, round of friends, and company, occaſioned me to keep very late hours: The *then* Biſhop of Lantaff lodged during the winter, on the floor under mine; the noiſe I made on coming home, and the added rumbling when got into my own apartment, with loud acting, ſinging, &c. made the Biſhop's lodging very uncomfortable to him. He ſent for

the landlord and informed him, my rehearſing in the day, and the greater noiſe I made at night, rendered him ſo uneaſy, that he was under the neceſſity of inſiſting on the young actor's inſtantly quitting the lodgings, or he would; for, he really had tried his patience to the utmoſt, and could no longer ſubmit to it. The landlord, per force, waited on his next door neighbours (Mr. and Mrs. Chaigneau) and informed them in full of this unfortunate alledgement of his Grace, and humbly hoped they would not be offended at his not continuing Mr. Wilkinſon as a lodger, as he could not permit it without ſuſtaining the loſs of his good and generous Biſhop. Mr. and Mrs. Chaigneau laughed very heartily at the complaint, agreed in opinion with the landlord, allowed that he and the Biſhop were both right, the latter having juſt cauſe for his ſtated objections. At dinner at my good home, where I actually was the king of the table, Mrs. Chaigneau with an aſſumed anger (a humour peculiar to the Iriſh only)—"My God, Tate, I am mighty angry with you; and faith you do not mind me!—I can tell you, Billy Chaigneau is angry with you too—Upon my conſcience, I do not think you care whether we are or not? but come my dear Tate, I will not make you uneaſy—we are both joking." So after explaining the landlord's viſit, with an ex-

traordinary bottle for me and the good Mr. William Chaigneau; and paſſing a happy afternoon with them and three or four intimates, I concurred in thinking it right to ſettle about my diſgraceful departure from my lodgings and neighbourhood; when Mrs. Chaigneau's bright thought (far ſuperior to mine with Mr. Sheridan) was, firſt to ſave Tate's money, and next not to inconvenience themſelves. She ſaid, "If you will not diſcredit our houſe as you have the Biſhop's, we have one in Big Strand Street, not let this winter; and there is a man and a woman ſervant live in it—it is decently furniſhed, and it is kept well aired—our own houſe which we live in, you know is your eating houſe; we look on you as our ſon—you cannot want any thing but tea for breakfaſt, and ſuch trifles. This is Friday, I will ſend immediately all neceſſaries, ſuch as ſheets, table linen, &c. &c. and all ſhall be comfortable by to-morrow night: Quit your lodging, and do not by any means fail in leaving a reſpectful card to the Biſhop, as I am certain you have been very troubleſome to him, or he would not have alledged ſuch complaints againſt you; for, he declares he is not angry, but you are a plague to him."

Theſe orders I obeyed—called at MY HOUSE (the ſound of which pleaſed me much) on Saturday noon, and was highly delighted, and told the

ſervant pompouſly, I ſhould not be at home till late, as I was engaged to dinner and for the evening, at Mr. George Hamilton's in Henry Street, with a large party. We dined at five; obſerve reader, that the cuſtom of dining in Dublin was and *is* much later than in London; very few, if any perſon or perſons in eſtabliſhed trade there, ever dine till three o'clock, but in general at four. I kept my appointment at Mr. Hamilton's, and a happy day and evening I had; I got home about three o'clock in the morning; proud and ſatisfied was I when conveyed in a chair to my new manſion, where all ſeemed to be conducted with the utmoſt care, and made comfortable for my reception.

A merry day, and plenty of good things, had prepared me for ſleep. The dining-room was ſpacious, the bed-chamber large, the bed excellent, and I laid myſelf down, expecting a delicious repoſe, to repair the fatigues of luxury: To relate what follows may ſeem ſuperfluous. I need not add, with a mind at eaſe, I ſoon had the bleſſing of a ſound ſleep; which to prince or peaſant is moſt delicious. "Well," ſays techy Impatience, "ſleep and be d——d! What's that to me?" Why, my waſpiſh friend, if you in any one point ſmatter of *antipathy*, here beſtow your pity on me; I aſk it as a charitable boon to my ſufferings, tho'

it is poſſible you may laugh at me, and I beg you will make ſome little allowance for what you do not feel; but if you do ſmatter of the like ſenſation, I am certain of your bounty. I can be aſtoniſhed how any man, woman, or child, can faint at ſeeing a cat, becauſe a cat I am partial to, and like as a companion; another will faint at the ſmell of cheeſe; a lady will ſhudder at a leg of mutton not being cut to pleaſe her; and a thouſand inſtances might be given of the weakneſs of human nature in ſuch trifling matters: Yet they are in truth terrible to the perſons who labour under the like unhappy prejudices, and too often laughed at by the obſervers, which is cruelty in the extreme: for how can I reconcile to myſelf, in conſcience, the being pleaſed with the terrors of another on ſeeing a cat, where I feel no uneaſineſs, but, on the contrary, pleaſure? And yet I ſhould be very angry indeed at any one's laughing at my horror, if a rat was near me: Yet ſo compoſed are we all at what does not affect ourſelves, that it is a lamentable truth to ſay (and we muſt all be ſenſible) that theſe things are unavoidably ſo.

That theſe unfortunate prejudices ſhould be ſtemed in their progreſs, is an indiſpenſable duty and leſſon, which, it is true, ought to be inculcated for our own ſakes, and the repoſe of others. That antipathies are dreadful, I think I can warrant,

prove, and explain: For a ſword or piſtol at my breaſt I do not think would prove ſo great an alarm to me, as a rat would in my pocket or bed; my diſtreſs on ſuch an accidental misfortune would be attended, not only with agonizing ſenſations, but, I verily believe, immediate danger.

To prove that fear is the reſult of nature, I will obſerve, that by my living on the banks of the Thames in London for many years, rats were as familiar as kittens to my ſight; nay, more ſo, for where I ſaw one cat I muſt have ſeen twenty rats, at low water, about the logs of wood, lighters, &c. On a fine day they ſwarmed, and towards evening it was their grand rendezvous. My mother had the ſame prejudice. I have heard her mention repeatedly, that when ſhe was near her time with me, one day, when dreſſed to dine out with company, being near the top of the ſtairs, a rat paſſed ſuddenly between her legs, which alarm cauſed her immediately to fall from the top to the bottom; and, inſtead of viſiting, was put to bed extremely ill, and judged to be in imminent danger: Whether that might be the original cauſe to ground theſe fears in me, I cannot decide; but am certain I am ſo.

To return to my houſe in Big-Strand-Street, where I left myſelf faſt aſleep, and thank God, that ſleep continued till within an hour of day-

light; but that hour ſeemed to me the longeſt and moſt painful I had ever experienced, (the fever and bliſters on my ancles not forgot); indeed we generally feel our preſent woes as the worſt. I was waked by a lump falling on my breaſt: My firſt conjecture was, that a thief was in the room, and had placed his hand there. I then thought, by no more moving, it might be a cat; which reflection was of great comfort and conſolation; and next, like Richard the Third, concluded it was but a dream, and poſſeſſed heroiſm ſufficient to ſtart myſelf up in the bed, and, like our ſtage Harry the Eighth, to cry out *Hough! hough!*—which act of valour was no ſooner performed than I was immediately ſaluted with the ſqueaking of vermin, and their running up and down the curtains, and over the bed, and under the bed. I, diſtilled almoſt to jelly with my fears, lay covered over head and ears, not daring to call for aſſiſtance, or feel for the ſtring of the bell, or even to move a limb.—The rats, I am convinced, muſt have made that room their conſtant nightly reſidence, not having been uſed, I ſuppoſe, for above twelve months. On my ſuddenly calling out and ſtriking the bed, thoſe devils, by ſuch an unexpected alarm of danger, muſt have been almoſt as much terrified for their preſervation as I was for mine: For had they (as I have been told they will) made an at-

tack, they would ſoon have conquered me, their petrified foe. What reſiſtance immediate danger might have enabled me to perform I know not; but as I feel at this moment on the relation, I am certain the bribe muſt be enormous that could prevail on me to touch a living rat.

When day-light had befriended me, and the gentry had retired to their ſecret apartments, I found the bell, and couragiouſly rung and called for the ſervants. At laſt a lazy dirty figure made his appearance, to whom I related my woeful tale, but did not find it made any impreſſion, or called forth the falling tear of pity for all my nightly ſufferings; and when the dingy Wowſki (his wife) made her *entree*, and had heard the particulars from her darling Trudge, they both laughed, and thought it a very good joke; the duſky lady only uttered, "O! faith I wiſh I had been with theſe varmant cratures; by my ſhoul I would have made ſport for them by cutting them pace male." However, though it was Sunday, I got the upholſterer, where I had lodged in Abbey-ſtreet, to oblige me with a man to take the bed down, and ſearch even the ticken, to ſee if any rats had taken refuge where a flea might have ſecurity or lodging. I had all the apparatus moved into the dining-room, and a large cat from Mrs. Chaigneau's was ſent to be as a guard.

All holes and crannies whatever were ſtopped; and, as a proof of my politeneſs to the inhabitants, I never, even at noon-day, entered that fatal chamber without a previous knocking.

This childiſh ſtory will be condemned by all, except ſuch as unfortunately are liable to ſuch unconquerable averſions;—nor would I here have inſerted it, but from one motive—to engage, as far as poſſible, ſome pity and allowance from thoſe who are ſo happy as not to be liable to ſuch diſagreeable ſenſations, however trifling they may be thought; for if a dungeon was my lot, my firſt idea would be the rat-holes.

> Some men there are love not a gaping pig,
> Some who are mad when they behold a cat.
> Maſterleſs paſſions ſway us to the mood
> Of what we like or lothe.———

I have frequently heard of a pet cat, but never yet of a pet rat:—I once conquered prejudice ſo far as to have familiarized myſelf to a pet ſquirrel, which certainly bears ſome reſemblance, though it is paying the frolickſome ſquirrel a ſhabby compliment. A pet mouſe has at times been happily cheriſhed in a lady's pocket, but never ſo particularly deſcribed or authenticated for its friendly and uncommon attachments, as by the

renowned General Baron Trenck, in his late Pruſſian Romance, printed within theſe three years, and univerſally read.—So now farewell to rats and mice, and ſuch *ſmall deer*,—and I hope for ever. Antipathies are as unconquerable as unanſwerable: John Bull loves beef and pudding, the Frenchman ſoup, the Dutchman butter, the Scotchman haggeſs, the Iriſhman potatoes, the Welchman leeks and kid, the Italian macaroni, and a Turk (what we find poiſon) laudanum.—It would unavoidably occaſion inconceivable trouble to invite a gueſt of every tribe and nation to one table, and poſſibly contrive the means to provide a favourite diſh for every ſeparate viſitant's palate; for there are as particular and fixed averſions to our eatables as to different ſpecies:—I like cheeſe, yet the friend at my elbow (perhaps ſtrong in conſtitution, and naturally robuſt and ſpirited) might faint at its being produced on the table. I can aver that cream ſauce to a turkey, with all my precaution and determination, to a certainty ſpoils my dinner:—It is a feaſt that takes away my ſtomach.

As I was lately ſpeaking of my Strand-ſtreet ſituation, I will proceed with giving information that the approaching 25th of February ſeemed to promiſe being moſt proſperous, from the exertions of Mr. Chaigneau, Lord Forbes, and my long liſt of more than common friends; my boxes

were rapidly taken, and, for want of places in that circle, no leſs than ſeven rows of the pit were added and railed in at box prices, which are the ſame as in London; indeed more, as every ſhilling goes in Ireland as thirteen pence. Mr. Chaigneau paid me forty guineas for tickets: the whole receipt of the houſe (not then ſo large as it was made by Moſſop after that time) was 154*l.* and an overflow from every part of the theatre: Gold tickets to a conſiderable amount, not only from my friends and ſome perſons of diſtinction, but particularly from the gentlemen of the army, over whom Mr. Chaigneau's ſituation as principal agent gave him great ſway, and he paid perſonal viſits every where for the purpoſe of ſerving me.

Jane Shore has been already ſtated as the play on this memorable night, but I have omitted the mentioning my own performance at that period: Lord Haſtings, I believe, was not much graced or honoured by my aſſuming his chamberlainſhip, together with his ſtar and garter, which did not receive from me any additional luſtre that could be poſſibly handed down to his ſucceſſors with honour. However, I cannot blame my manager for not being well dreſſed; the wardrobe it is true was not equal to equip a number of perſons of faſhion fit to appear at court on a royal birthday: But with the manager's conſent, and Mr.

Dexter's approbation, I wore Mr. Dexter's grand ſuit for particular occaſions, which was a new blue ſatin, richly trimmed with ſilver, looked very elegant, and what was better, fitted me exactly.

Mr. Dexter was the gentleman who appeared at Drury-Lane in 1752 in Oroonoko with more than common expectation of great ſucceſs, and was in 1758 noted as a leading actor in the heroes and fine gentlemen on Smock-Alley ſtage. I muſt ſay in juſtice to myſelf, that I was perfect to the line, if not to the letter, conſequently the play went ſmoothly on, and I obtained applauſe of courſe from ſo numerous a ſet of friends. Mrs. Fitzhenry, in Alicia, gave (as was uſual) great ſatisfaction, as I did to an extravagant degree when magnificently arrayed for Queen Dollalolla in Tom Thumb, which obtained a continued roar, as I played it as Woffington; and I certainly may be allowed to ſay, the ſteadineſs and earneſtneſs of the imitation was at leaſt equal to any modern profeſſor's attempt.

The rapid ſtep from my late illneſs, extreme poverty, and friendleſs ſituation, had taken ſuch a turn, that with my coach, table-acquaintance, preſents, and great benefit I thought my fortune made, and early in March, with true felt gratitude, not from

that day, week, or month, but never effaced to the preſent moment, now including above thirty-two years, I took leave of my good friends, in poſſeſſion of two valuable gifts, health and wealth.—— Indeed to the wonderful care of theſe good and undeſcribable perſons can I only attribute my exiſtence, and alſo my wealth, as from that time, till encumbered with the cares of my preſent unpromiſing and perplexed ſtate, I never knew, in the courſe of ſeveral years, the want of caſh; which ſtate of happineſs my after frequent viſits to Dublin made me, as a young man, in a kind of independence.

Early in life I envied theatrical monarchy, and like moſt things, when obtained, I ſoon experienced (like the wiſeſt man) "That all was and is vanity and vexation of ſpirit;" and as Gay ſays,

> Life's but a jeſt, and all things ſhew it:
> I thought ſo once, but now I know it.

With now 130l. in that pocket, which a very few months before contained only two guineas (and which I *then* termed a treaſure)—but good God! what a change! — like a ten thouſand pound prize to a cobbler, the contraſt nearly the ſame,

only with this difference, the cobbler might have been in health and happy, but I had been ill, very ill, and a poverty-ſtruck youth—I ſailed from Ireland with a fair wind, attended by the waft of numberleſs good wiſhes for my ſafe arrival in Old England.

At Cheſter I met young Mr. Bagnal, (a gentleman of family in Ireland) and as I was become a man of fortune, we travelled poſt, like gentlemen, and arrived ſafe in the metropolis. I felt myſelf in ſte[illegible], air, and mind, a very different perſon from what I was when I left London.

Soon after my arrival I took leave of Mr. Bagnal, and preſented myſelf with as much duty as pleaſure to my dear mother, as every ſon ſhould and ought to do, and am certain the return was overpaid by her. Her joy, ſurpriſe, and a thouſand *etceteras* which may be ſuppoſed; and only affectionate and good mothers can feel ſuch heavenly ſenſations: I do not ſpeak from ſuppoſition, but can aver that though there *was*, *is*, and *ever will be* good parents, yet mine was really ſprung from the tree called the *Nonpareil*; and I can with truth boaſt I poſſeſſed one truly praiſe-worthy quality, and that was, being one of the beſt ſons, not from any merit as a duty from myſelf due to my mother, but becauſe I loved and revered her worth, and converſed with my *true*

friend. And what might be termed coldly that of duty, did not create the ground-work only of my eſteem, for all I did ſprung ſolely from ſelf-love, as making her happy was my inclination, pleaſure, and delight; nor do I mean by theſe proteſtations to convey merit in any extraordinary degree to myſelf, for had ſhe not been a ſenſible and an endearing mother, I doubt whether my good behaviour had been conſpicuous beyond mediocrity. The giving to her an account of my riches, and my friends in Ireland was a feaſt; and my producing the 130l. bill was a dazzling ſight indeed, though only in black and white letters.

Soon after my arrival I paid a viſit to Mr. Garrick, who wiſhed me joy, though not in a joyful manner. I gave him an account of my benefit, &c. and thanked him for his leave of abſence. The ſecond Saturday after my being in London, as I had ſtaid in Ireland by permiſſion only, I went to the treaſurer's office for my weekly ſtipend of thirty ſhillings, as ſtipulated in my article, but which at that time would only have been twenty ſhillings, as the ſeaſon of Lent was not expired.

On my aſking for my ſalary, Mr. Pritchard, firſt treaſurer, and Mr. Wood, ſub-treaſurer, informed me, that as they had not received any orders from Mr. Garrick or Mr. Lacey, they dared

not pay me, and I could not, as they apprehended, have any right to it, but would inquire what they were to do when they ſaw either of the managers. I argued my right of payment was undoubtable by my article, but of courſe was obliged to depart as I came, neither richer nor poorer.

A few days after I met Mr. Garrick in Bridge-ſtreet, who, on ſeeing me, inſtantly, with upbraiding and ſevere terms, accoſted me for my being ſo audacious (as he termed it) to call at his office for money. He added, (in a ſupercilious manner) that I had met with a little accidental ſucceſs in Ireland, a circumſtance that never could happen again; and he had from motives of *charity* obtained me a retreat to ſecure me from want of bread, and I repaid his kindneſs with impudent aſſurance and ingratitude. This ſudden attack really alarmed me, as I had ſtill formed great hopes for my future ſucceſs on Mr. Garrick's power and friendſhip from what he had ſo often profeſſed, though not yet put into practice. In my defence I urged, (with the aid of truth) that I had only been abſent upon furlow, and by his permiſſion had only continued on the ſame granted authority, not having preſumed to ſtay in Dublin, though a ſevere and dangerous illneſs had intervened; but under the ſanction of that grant, and having an article for that and the fol-

lowing year, I eſteemed myſelf much obliged to him. But *inwardly* preſuming on my right of article, I could not in word, manner, or obedience, in duty to myſelf, give up a point I had ſo far engaged in with that great monarch, but perſiſted, that on my return to London, and his theatre, I was every way entitled to my ſalary.

He auſterely anſwered, had I returned (as he exexpected I ſhould) in great diſtreſs, his own goodneſs and feelings would have allowed me the ſalary; but as I aſſerted a falſehood, and was not in want, my inſolence deſerved puniſhment, for there was not any ſuch agreement ſubſiſting between us. I, all ſecurity, and full of open conviction againſt him, in the face of day not only aſſerted my right, but haſtily produced my bond, which was worded thus on the back, "Articles "of agreement between David Garrick and "James Lacey, Eſquires, and Tate Wilkinſon, "Gentleman, for two years, from October 24, "1757." Here I concluded myſelf quite ſure, and of courſe felt as elate as any plaintiff on the gaining a verdict in his favour. When after a look of diſdain and a ſneer of ineffable contempt, Mr. Garrick ſaid, "Thou fooliſh pert boy, go home to thy *Mamma*, ſhe can read though you cannot; look carefully over the contents of your article and you will there find, that on the inſide it does

not commence till September 1758." I of course had no occasion to ejaculate, "O upright Judge!" but hung down my head and sneaked home to my mother, when to both our astonishments it was really and truly as Mr. Garrick had said. This shews how careful people should be to read every thing before they sign; and never to trust the seeming generosity and good nature of others. The contents of the inside of this great and mighty article did not take place till the September following, 1758. How he could think it worth his notice to treat so insignificant an object, as he termed me some months before, in so mean, so artful, and so ungentlemanlike a manner, I from that time to this could never devise, unless through fear of my talents as an imitator, he held me in a contemptuous light; yet still, ever watchful and careful in regard to himself, he might perhaps think me worth retaining for a trifling salary, as an exotic for his hot-house (for he always used to term me his exotic); therefore he chose to lock me up like a wild beast, to prevent my distracting his repose or his consequence. Thus without salary was I obliged to remain, and have recourse to my philosophy, and sit down contented; but being a man of fortune as I *then* thought myself, I went on a visit to a new spot, the fashionable city of Bath, to drink the waters, having had an

invitation from my friend Mr. Hull. My intimacy with that gentleman and Miſs Morriſon, now Mrs. Hull, was fixed from our firſt acquaintance the ſummer before at Maidſtone; from that time to the preſent, I have ever been favoured with their ſtudy to oblige and ſerve me, which I have never yet had it in my power to return according to my wiſhes. This acknowledgment I offer as a debt of honour; and though not ſubſtantial, my gratitude and good opinion could not let ſlip this opportunity of paying a tributary compliment, to the merit of thoſe particular and worthy friends.

My firſt appearance at Bath, was on Monday the 8th of May, 1758, for Miſs Morriſon's benefit. Othello, Mr. Wilkinſon, from the theatre-royal, Dublin; alſo, Mr. Wilkinſon will treat Mr. *Foote* with a Diſh of his own Tea. I was kindly received, Mr. Quin was at the play; the imitations were well received; but from my not being known on the ſtage, and not having had the ſanction of a London audience, the applauſe was very different from what I had been honoured with in Dublin, and what I afterwards gained *at Bath*, when I had become more uſed to the ſtage by a variety of playing, and the praiſes and applauſe of London had wreathed my brow with that all powerful phraſe termed *the faſhion:* ſo prevalent

is that word, that even the Siddons and the Jordan bow to its ſhrine. But a fickle jade is Faſhion; and the firſt actreſs that thinks ſhe is ſecure, will at times find Mrs. Faſhion a ſhallow and inconſtant friend.

I gave Tea for Mr. Hull, on Wedneſday the 10th of May; and acted Eſſex (for the firſt time), with Cadwallader in the farce of the Author, for Miſs Ibbott. In the interim, the families of the Townſends and the Hanways in London, were all well-wiſhers for my mother's and my welfare, and were ever deviſing ways and means to advance and eſtabliſh my future ſucceſs; their tables, when I was in London, were my conſtant welcome places of reſort. While I was figuring away at Bath for my own diverſion from May, without any engagement, till September following at Drury-Lane, they were deliberating for my real proſperity much more than I could myſelf. The Townſends had at that very juncture Major Strode and his lady, from Portſmouth, at their houſe on a viſit: Major Strode was the firſt in command at the Portſmouth garriſon; at the ſame time there were a Mrs. Arnold and Miſs Arnolds her daughters, from Portſmouth, alſo on a viſit in London; they were diſtant relations to the Hanways. My mother who was a frequent and a welcome viſitor, and indeed a deſirable gueſt, being at dinner at the

Townſends on a grand gala day, and where the above ladies and gentlemen were preſent, the good old lady Mrs. Townſend, with her genuine marks of benevolence and kindneſs, deſired a glaſs round to the health of her young friend and pupil for prayers, Tate Wilkinſon, which was of courſe immediately aſſented to, and complied with according to her wiſh. This gave my truly good mother an opportunity to inform the worthy circle, that after all the afflictions and misfortunes that had unremittingly purſued her through life, ſhe was, ſhe thanked the great Being, bleſſed with a ſon who made it his ſtudy to ſupport her and to beſtow every aſſiſtance in his power to render her latter days comfortable and eaſy. They all agreed that being ſo good a ſon as my mother had deſcribed, I deſerved every praiſe and every encouragement.—Mr. Jonas Hanway confirmed what my mother had related, and they all joined in wiſhes for my ſucceſs, and a continuance of regard and duty being paid to her allowed worth. After a ſhort ſilence, Mrs. Strode broke out in the following exclamation—"Good God! Mr. Hanway, a thought ſtrikes me ſwift as lightning, whereby we can with pleaſure and eaſe to ourſelves be of infinite ſervice to Tate"—My mother of courſe bowed and gave eager attention, as did every one at the hoſpitable table. Mrs. Strode

proceeded with obſerving, it was then a time of war between France and England, May 1758, and we have at Portſmouth, added ſhe, a glorious fleet for the honour of Old England and the terror of France, in conſequence of which our little garriſon town is full of ſoldiers and ſailors, and all with plenty of money in their pockets, which they cannot bear the thoughts of keeping there—as ſailors in particular are never careful for the morrow;—we have every year at Portſmouth a company of players, who travel alſo to Plymouth and Exeter: A Mr. Kennedy, an elderly man, is the manager of the company, and he always makes Portſmouth his ſummer place of reſidence; the Major, herſelf, and family, ſhould return there in a few days, and when arrived at home would ſend for the manager, and then make a point of her friend and old acquaintance Mrs. Wilkinſon's ſon being engaged for the ſummer ſeaſon; ſhe alſo added, her houſe ſhould be my ordinary, and from her intimacy with Mrs. Wilkinſon and her friend Mrs. Townſend, ſhe would introduce Tate to all her acquaintance; and flattered herſelf ſhe could anſwer that his jaunt to Portſmouth, by her contrivance and management, ſhould be profitable and pleaſant, with every reaſon for his ſatisfaction, and none to occaſion regret. The party aſſembled added every aſſurance of pa-

tronage and ſupport to the theatre, and had no apprehenſions, that my friends and merit could do ſo well as in Dublin, but they ſhould prove a ſample at Portſmouth, in a comparative view, likewiſe to boaſt of. This was no ſooner ſaid than done by Mrs. Strode.

All theſe wonderful and agreeable particulars it may be ſuppoſed were by the next poſt tranſmitted to me at Bath, with all the joy and heart-felt ſatisfaction and partiality of a fond mother. I returned on the wing to her in London, and got equipped with what I thought neceſſary for a young gentleman, not omitting a laced ſuit of clothes, which in thoſe days were all the faſhion, and a rich gold laced Kevenhuller hat; and waited with impatience for my return of the Portſmouth lottery ticket, which proved no blank but a prize: for Mrs. Strode and the Arnolds finiſhed the buſineſs they had undertaken; not like that of the law's delay, for on their arrival at home, it was no ſooner mentioned than accompliſhed; as when the theatrical troop arrived, the manager was ſummoned to attend them, and he was commanded, *not* intreated, under peril of their authority and the ſevere law in force, to comply with Mrs. Strode's mandate: for that company of players did not want or approve of interlopers, either to act the characters they poſſeſſed, or to give any

encouragement to ſtrangers; fearing, if they did grant permiſſion, they might lead the inclination of the town into temptation, and create an appetite for the London actors during their vacation: for many London performers at ſuch a critical time, would not have diſliked ſuch a pleaſant trip (it being only ſeventy-two miles from the great city) for health and profit—and they would have been refreſhed with delightful ſea breezes; and the Londoners, once admitted, would have diminiſhed the fame as well as the profit of the Devonſhire and and Hampſhire candidates of the ſock and buſkin, who baſked in the ſunſhine of wealth at Plymouth and Portſmouth during *the glorious war*, ſo called by the poor players, like Mr. Cumberland's Jew, who ſays, "The plague is a bleſſed circumſtance;" and both for the ſame motive—ſelf-intereſt. It was agreed, I was to have a ſhare (as there was no diſtinction of emolument from Romeo to the Apothecary, all received an equal portion), likewiſe a clear benefit whenever I choſe to appoint; and was to act from Friday the 9th of June, 1758, until Auguſt the 14th, as often as called upon by the manager. My being repreſented to him as a gentleman whom a large party of people of faſhion were determined to ſupport, and not being ſufficiently eſtabliſhed as a performer to cauſe any grounds for jealouſy in point of fame, prevented

any oppoſition from the company to hinder the manager's compliance with the offer propoſed for the noviciate; therefore as it conveyed an idea of aiding their intereſts, and a refuſal would have occaſioned much diſpleaſure, the preliminaries were agreed to; and Mrs. Strode wrote to Mr. Jonas Hanway an account of her ſucceſs, and ſummoned me immediately to Portſmouth. I received a letter of invitation couched in genteel terms from the manager; and on this expected and wiſhed-for intelligence, I ſet off with eager curioſity for the new ſcene of pleaſure; and what rendered it more enchanting to my youthful mind, was a corrobroation of ſuch happy events ſuddenly ſpringing up and ſnatching me from the brink of hopeleſs poverty and deſpair, and all within the ſpace of ſeven months; and, as in a dream or enchantment, was known and engaged in not only a polite circle of acquaintance, but welcomed and received with ſuch flattering aſpect from every benign and friendly countenance, that a ſtranger to have entered the room would really have ſuppoſed I had been a perſon of conſequence in an enviable circle. Happy, happy minds, that ſhed ſuch ſunſhine and genial rays on the ſons and daughters of affliction! And as happy are thoſe young ladies and gentlemen who are favoured with ſuch rays from ſuperiors as to make them obſervant of not

only manners, but of what is really good. Youth of both ſexes, when treated ſo kindly, are too apt to attribute it as a compliment to their own ſelf ſuperiority, inſtead of truly feeling where the gratitude is juſtly due. Indeed I have ſeen ſo much of ſupercilious behaviour on granting a favour, and ſo many inſtances of affectation and ſelf-ſufficiency on receiving, that I truly think and believe it would have been a difficult matter for one poſſeſſed of real genius to diſtinguiſh on which ſide lay the greateſt abſurdity.

I arrived ſafe at the garriſon, but not without inquiries at each gate and drawbridge for my name, and what was my buſineſs, as the road from Hillſey Barracks to Portſmouth, is a continued chain of drawbridges, &c. I had not been houſed three hours in this well guarded town, when a Capt. Chambers, brother to Sir Charles Chambers, an old friend and intimate of my father's, and well acquainted with Captain James Jones (formerly mentioned), of the Foot-Guards, and a Captain Scott of Cheſter, with three or four other officers, came, not only to welcome me, but Capt. Chambers, as my late father's friend, in the name of all his brother officers, gave me an invitation to conſtantly dine and ſup with them at their meſs: I of courſe accepted of it, and made a decent acknowledgment for the fa-

vour conferred; but my heart felt much more than my tongue could expreſs. In ſhort, from the introduction of the Strodes, the Arnolds, and the officers, (my father having been univerſally known, and I may add, beloved by the gentlemen of the army), I had ſuch a general acquaintance, that there actually were few houſes in Portſmouth but where I was received on the ſame footing as when in Dublin; and from my univerſal intimacy, the ſtreets ſeemed to become a part of my own fancied property.

On Friday, June the 9th, I appeared in Othello, which part I had founded, as Mr. *Hitchcock* obſerves in his hiſtory of the Iriſh Stage, on the manner, &c. I had obſerved and caught from Mr. Barry; and alſo gave *Tea*. The theatre was crowded to a degree; and had my performance, been bad inſtead of tolerable, it would have been attended with applauſe (the Tea of courſe was received with much approbation): but I was fond of undertaking too much at one time, either to ſerve my reputation as an actor, or to the preſervation of my health as a man, for my conſtitution was never one of the ſtrongeſt, being racked at times from my youth to this day with a dreadful bilious complaint; and an irregular life has encouraged that enemy every week to convince me of its pitileſs power, which

puſhes my feeble ſteps downward, before my time, from the pinnacle of fifty. I muſt remark, that as my reception was ſecure from my friends being preſent, I ſhould have conſulted my own eaſe, and have had patience to have ſtudied better for my *own* advantage, by giving more ſatisfaction to the audience and leſs trouble to myſelf; but young performers have an idea of ſtriking the obſervers with their various powers, which is a wrong and dangerous experiment. For inſtance, it would have been more prudent for me to have acted *Othello* only, as a teſt of my abilities, and reſerved my *Tea* to another night, for the refreſhment of my acquaintance.

When I look over and recollect ſome of the nights-work I have gone through on the ſtage, to my infinite fatigue, it is wonderful I am exiſting to relate the particulars; the ſtudy, the labour, and the bad hours I have ever kept conſidered. Indeed at this inſtant I feel my ſtomach painful, which makes the obſervation occur, that perhaps could I provide a better leg in exchange for my broken one, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed, if in high ſpirits the following week, I was to laugh at my own reflections and gravity: So true is Lord Cheſterfield's remarks on our courage and our fears, with every other ſenſation according to our habit of health, cuſtom, and exerciſe. From the ſame

thought I imagine, arifes the faying afcribed by our foldiers of the Americans, "They did not feel bold on fuch a day." However from my firft ftage fucceſs, I certainly was bit by a theatrical tarantula, for my appetite for acting was inſatiable. Illneſs (unleſs very ſevere) never was a reſtraint; for if able to crawl out of bed, I have often gone to the theatre much diſordered, and if my performance has been received with applauſe, have returned home recovered and perfectly well: On the contrary, I do not know a more mortifying or diſagreeable ſituation, than to act to a poor houſe, indiſpoſed in health, and to be only indifferently received; yet theſe unpleaſing circumſtances have happened to every performer, from the higheſt to loweſt at particular times—it is the unavoidable lot of human life in all its ſtages. If an actor or actreſs be really ill thoſe who are well ſhould lend every aſſiſtance in their power on ſuch an emergency to ſerve the royal till, and preſerve the audience in temper. Not any thing ſours a congregated aſſemblage of perſons ſo much as frequent apologies; nay, the manager is often blamed from the pettiſhneſs of the audience, becauſe the performer is ſick; and I am ſorry to ſay, I believe aſſiſtance on ſuch ſudden diſappointments, is often refuſed, not ſo much from ill nature in the diſpoſition of the actor or actreſs, as fear in the

player, of not being well received by the perſons aſſembled together; and beſides yielding to a falſe pride and fancied ſelf-importance in the one ſo fixed on, to ſupply the place of the ſick performer, which indeed might often be prevented if the audience would good naturedly ſupport the actor or actreſs, who in ſuch a predicament undertakes the part, however inferior his or her ſituation may be in a theatre; and they may by ſuch kind aſſiſtance draw forth ſparks of future greatneſs, which may have been obſcured by not having had an opportunity of diſplaying them, and of receiving the ſanction of the public.

But let me, crab-like, get back to Portſmouth, from which place I had not any right to have ſtrayed. But I fancy myſelf in theſe remarks and incidents as if I was ſpeaking to ſome particular friend, and if I cannot obtain great lenity, pray, in compaſſion to yourſelf, good reader, as well as to me, cloſe and drop the book; for I neither poſſeſs wit or talents, nor profeſs any ſuch gifts as to furniſh me with hopes of entertaining any one as a writer; indeed I never had an idea, or attempted any thing of the kind. So I ſtand like Hope, wiſhing patience to be granted to every reader, ſprinkled with a few grains of good humour. If any one aſk, Why I now take this liberty? I will honeſtly and frankly own, that con-

finement occaſioned by a broken limb, has made the year very *tedious*, *wearifome*, and heavy; therefore I ſit and recall paſt joys and misfortunes to my mind, and as I know they are various, I think they may pleaſe both friends and enemies for any hour that may hang heavy on their hands; and though time is allowed as precious, yet the wiſe people ſometimes throw an hour away, not to be bought back again at any price. Next, I value myſelf on the authenticity of what I relate and pledge my truth and honour, for the whole being a recitation of ſtrict matters of fact only. Mrs. Bellamy averred the ſame, but ſhe took ſuch pains to be untrue in her accounts, that it could not be the effect of a bad memory, as ſhe hints; but, on the contrary, labour and ſtudy to dreſs things ſo widely different from what they really were. I would have ſet her right then, and ſhe mentions it in her ſixth volume; but ſhe there acknowledges ſhe is a bad chronologiſt.

From what I have mentioned of my Portſmouth viſit, it may be eaſily conjectured I was naturally not a little vain of my pleaſant ſituation. I played an extenſive liſt of characters, and it would ſeem incredible if not accounted for by my long regular ſtudy and practice as a lad, when mock-manager. Some I acted with merit, and can truly ſay, *all* with applauſe; ſuch is the happineſs of

being ſecure of the good will of ſuperiors, and obtaining a general kind opinion. Nay, am certain at that time, my youth and inexperience gained me ſuch a partiality from the families I was intimately acquainted with, that they really fancied, as I was a favourite among them, that I was clever, where indeed I was not, and when glaringly wrong or imperfect, would readily frame an excuſe for me, even againſt my own conviction of error.

Liſt of characters at Portſmouth, acted by Mr. Wilkinſon, from June 9, till Auguſt 14, 1758.

Othello, *twice.*	* Horatio.
* Romeo, *twice.*	Haſtings.
* Hotſpur.	Eſſex.
* Lord Townly.	* Lear, *four times.*
* Richard III. 3 *times.*	* Hamlet, *twice.*
* Caſtalio.	Oreſtes, *twice.*

* Oſmyn, in the Mourning Bride.

FARCES.

Cadwallader, *ſix times.*	* Petruchio.
* Ld Chalkſtone, *twice.*	Tea, *ten times.*

N. B. Thoſe marked with a * I had not acted before; but it proves my induſtry to make myſelf well uſed to the ſtage.

During my reſidence here, I wiſhed for a nearer view of the Iſle of Wight; for it had a

tempting and beautiful effect from Portſmouth ramparts. The Bath company were there at that time, with them I had nearly engaged myſelf on the late trip to Bath, had not Mrs. Strode's lucky thought intervened, and put a ſtop to the buſineſs, and a fortunate preventative it was. That, and another eſcape of the ſame kind ſome years after, makes it always recur to my mind as the peculiar care of Providence. Indeed the Portſmouth engagement was a lucky golden drop of Madam Fortune's in every reſpect.

The Bath comedians were induced to the Iſle of Wight by the ſelf ſame bait, that at one time or the other ſeduces all mankind, that is the love of lucre; and which great miniſters, as well as great players ever have in view. The Bath company hearing from the clatter and the din of arms throughout the kingdom, that an encampment of conſequence was to be eſtabliſhed for the ſummer, and the ladies of that theatre, ſhort legged and thick legged, having a prediliction in favour of the knapſack, all voted to pack up their tatters and follow the drum to the Iſle of Wight. Nor are theatrical ladies ſingular in that particular; indeed there needs no ghoſt to inform the world that females of all degrees, to uſe a common expreſſion, *ſet their caps at a red coat.*

Their theatrical Bath majeſties therefore ordered

a baggage waggon, well loaded with armour, foils, truncheons, ſpears, daggers, and all the implements of war were carefully packed up in caſe of danger, to repel the French in their flat-bottomed boats, as well as to prove to the regiments, how ably the female warriors were prepared to face the enemy. The waggon was intruſted not only with all the theatrical wardrobe, but with all their own private geer, and that ſeriouſly ſpeaking was a property of real value, conſiſting of linen, clothes, jewels, regalia, &c. to repreſent kings and queens of France and England, Spain, Portugal, &c. alſo emperours and empreſſes, that never were or ever will be; all theſe treaſures and neceſſaries were ſafely ſtowed, not forgetting the bones appertaining to Hamlet, Caliſta, &c. Their all was intruſted to the protection of a rude booriſh Wiltſhire waggoner, thunder and lightning not omitted, but left to the care of the ſtage-keeper, who undertook, and ſaid, "He was perfectly competent from conſtant practice, to conduct and guide ſuch troubleſome and dangerous elements."

Thunder and lightning, attended by a wonderful eclipſe, ſeldom pleaſes even on the ſtage, except in the Duke of Buckingham's Rehearſal, where it always raiſes a laugh inſtead of a ſtorm. But lo! the *whole* was deſtroyed by fire the firſt night of the waggon's journey on Saliſbury plain; this is

not more ſtrange than true, Mr. Keaſberry, now manager of the Bath theatre, can teſtify the fact. It was not occaſioned by the elements above, nor yet by the ſtage thunder and lightning, but by the waggoner's inattention, and not endeavouring to ſave any part of the goods, when the machine had taken fire; and conſequently as no water or any aſſiſtance was to be had, all the property, to a conſiderable amount, was conſumed.

The diſtreſſed and harraſſed troops muſtered at Newport, where Queen *Ibbot* verified her favourite Shakſpeare's words——

> " A clout upon that head
> " Where late a diadem ſtood."

They prepared as well as they poſſibly could to open their ſmall theatre, in the little town of Newport; for, then the players argument was too mournful to admit much talk.

There were four or five regiments, if not more, encamped there; the gentlemen of the army are in general theatrical and generous, and theſe qualities never were more neceſſary than after that unfortunate fire. The gentlemen expreſſed an univerſal deſire to make a compenſation for their diſtreſs, and indeed it might be reckoned incumbent on them ſo to have promiſed and acted, as due to a debt of honour, to make good their loſſes,

which happened in consequence of their desire to give these gentlemen entertainment, who were so cooped up from their usual round of diversions; and certainly so established a company as those of the Bath theatre, to undertake so hazardous and so long a journey, had a right to expect support and respect. I went to pay my devoirs to them, by taking a boat with only one man to row me across the arm of the sea which seperates Hampshire from that charming romantic spot, the Isle of Wight. The afternoon was fine and serene; I stayed with them two days, and was highly satisfied with its rural beauties, but on my return the sea ran very high, and the wind blew a hurricane, which alarmed me so much, that I was really rejoiced when got into Portsmouth; and was greatly surprised when several gentlemen of the navy told me, it was a very dangerous expedition, and what not one of them would have attempted, except on necessity and duty, but not on any means by way of a frolick.

"As one woe treads upon another's heels," as Shakspeare observes, so did another misfortune happen to my good friends Mr. Keasberry and Mr. Griffith; for they had scarcely got their necessary repairs after the dreadful conflagration, when as Mrs. Inchbald's epilogue expresses, "Down came an order to suspend the ball;" or in plain English,

they had been there but a very ſhort time, when orders came for the whole camp to break up and march for Cowes, and immediately embark on board the ſhipping prepared for them at St. Helens, and ſail on a ſecret expedition againſt the French; and as the town of Newport could not without the aſſiſtance of the army, provide for, or by any means ſupport the Bath company; ſo the players packed up their little *all* and ſailed for Southampton, and from thence repaired to Reading in Berkſhire, where they continued till the ſeaſon for the uſual opening of the Bath theatre.

My benefit at Portſmouth, was on Monday the 24th of July, the Provoked Huſband, with Tea, and the part of Cadwallader; nothing under full price, and by deſire the gallery and pit all made one price. A great houſe was of courſe expected. Indeed that ſeaſon, I do not remember there was a bad one; therefore no need of the traveller's talent to make it a wonder, that mine was a great one.

But will not the reader ſtare at ſuch a piece of uncommon luck to happen, and to come on a ſudden burſt? for the command of the army was conducted ſo well, and ſo ſecretly, that we had not a notion or even a whiſper of the kind of any ſuch expectations on the Wedneſday;

but on the Friday and Saturday the town was crowded with officers, &c.—This occaſioned a great houſe on the Saturday July 22, not an uſual night of playing; and on Sunday his Royal Highneſs the Duke of York arrived, and honoured me with his company at the play on the Monday, where he favoured me with much notice; and, as the ſaying is, the *whole world* was there, all at Wilkinſon's benefit. Whoever remembers that expedition planned againſt Cherbourgh will know this account tallies to the day and the hour. The theatre and ſtage were ſo crowded, that it was difficult to perform. Part of the regiment of his Majeſty's guards, with naval officers, and thoſe of ſeveral regiments, and ſtrangers innumerable, with the marines, &c. all combined could eaſily have filled a London theatre.

The magnificent and powerful fleet, added to every other brilliancy, made the whole a glorious ſight; not that any ſhip pleaſed me more, however gaudily dreſſed at Spithead, than our theatrical frigate, ſo nobly adorned on my benefit night; and to mark my ſingular good luck, in three days they were all embarked; the wind was fair, and away they ſailed, for the glory of Old England.

My *Tea* the night of my benefit was of great

ſervice not only there but was remembered and related as a matter of merit in the *little village* called London.

Colonel Cæſar, of the guards (Mrs. Woffington's defender and protector) was at the play, and ſaw and felt the force of my imitation of that lady.

I was introduced to ſeveral gentlemen, with whom afterwards I was very intimate.—It was at that time my acquaintance firſt commenced with the late General St. Leger, which continued till the year of his death; he honoured me with being my particularly attached and intimate friend, as all my Yorkſhire acquaintance can teſtify. The laſt dinner he had at his own houſe at Park-Hill, I was with him by particular invitation, as alſo Capt. Smelt, who accompanied him to Dublin, where death ſnatched away my friend and patron. With the truly accompliſhed nephew of General St. Leger an intimacy I cannot boaſt, but can exultingly mention the honour of many favours and acts of kindneſs—not paid to my own deſerts, but by a compliment which originated from his certain knowledge that his uncle, the late General St. Leger, was not only my patron, but honoured me with his friendſhip.—One of the bleſſings I long for (during my ſhort remainder of life) is, that I may ſee that gentleman ſituated in rank

and affluence equal to the Prince's friend, and his own moſt ſanguine expectations, accompanied with many years to enjoy that proſperity with health, ſpirits, and increaſing happineſs; let my ſituation be what it will, I ſhall always rejoice at never-fading laurels circling the brows of Colonel St. Leger.

Colonel Thornton, of the Yorkſhire Blues, was alſo on the Cherbourg expedition, and with whom I could boaſt the honour of continued friendſhip in London, till I loſt him as I did my General, for death ſweeps all. Colonel Thornton was one of the moſt lively tavern-friends I ever knew.

After the combined circumſtances of luck at Portſmouth I returned with a full pocket, all elated, to London, not having in the leaſt a contemptible opinion of my own abilities. Succeſs makes people vain, and in truth, without a touch of vanity, "little worthy would be reſolved or done."

Without a ſpice of this ſaid vanity performers would not have courage to ſuſtain the ſhock and proceed—For at the *beſt* the ſtage has its bitters mingled with its ſweets, which cannot be known till taſted and experienced, for ſurely no other profeſſion can be ſo fickle and precarious: Indeed I know of no compariſon compatible, but a

similitude to the most splendid situation in this world, which is the court: For notwithstanding the jump of difference and the seeming impertinence of the assertion, it is certain that the *ins* and *outs* of courts, with many *etceteras*, leave no doubt of the resemblance being striking, strong, and apposite.

My time in London, till the house opened in September 1758, being only three weeks, was very pleasant, and I was chiefly employed in relating my Portsmouth adventures, with a description of guns and drums, and the wonders I had seen performed by the army and navy: I had all the great names as familiar in my mouth as household words. When by reflection my conceit was a little cooled, I waited on my master Garrick once more, in a frock trimmed with gold-lace, which made him dart his eyes through my weak brain. My first words after my salutation were, "Sir, what am I to make my first appearance in, and when?"—for now I was not so timid and afraid of this lord of lords and ruler of princes, as I was the year before when I acted as his groom, and rode his hobby-horse. He was on this easy question so full of hum—s and ha—s, and hey, why, now, y—s, they, now really I think——that finding nothing could come from nothing, I very soon obliged him by retiring, as I was certain he wish-

ed my abſence: and having pleaſed my youthful vanity, by not having preſented myſelf before him in ſuch poverty-ſtruck habilaments as I formerly had done, I may be allowed at that time to pronounce my conduct excuſeable, as it was boyiſh, for I was not nineteen till the 7th of November following.—Indeed he told me that day, as he often had done, that he hated exotics, and *I* was one:—But in a few days he ſent me Prince Volſcius in the Rehearſal, which I reliſhed very well, as I thought the run of the verſe and the ſituation would fit in a ſtriking manner for me to exhibit a likeneſs of Barry, and that I could make it have a ſudden and entertaining effect on the audience; but Garrick certainly was in hopes I would return it, as not thinking it of conſequence, and afford him an opportunity for anger, which would have kept me at a diſtance, and prevented my daring to be troubleſome.

On the morning the play of the Rehearſal was called, I was convinced the above conjecture of mine was right. "Why, hey, now Wilkinſon," ſays Garrick — "Hey, now, what, hey—a—I think now that you —— Why, Croſs—now, now, here, you, you, have ſent this part now to this lad; I muſt not truſt him with this Volſcius; you know I muſt have ſome ſteady perſon to depend on——Packer, now, hey, Packer—for if

Wilkinſon does it he will be at ſome of his d—d tricks and be taking off, or ſome d—d thing or another—Do, Croſs, take the part back from Wilkinſon, and I will think of ſomething elſe for him."

Volſcius was of courſe taken from me, and I retired amidſt the ſneers and laughter of his Majeſty's company of comedians, with Garrick ſaying to them all, "Did you ever now ſee ſuch a d——d exotic? he would have deſtroyed my whole play of the Rehearſal and be d——d to him."——Here my greatneſs received a ſtab, tho' not deſervedly, as it muſt be granted my ambition had not been inſolent when contented with Prince Volſcius for a firſt appearance as Mr. *Somebody* on a London ſtage; and what a falling off was it to have ſuch contempt thrown upon the Portſmouth Roſcius!—Indeed I was not ordered to wait in plays as in the preceding ſeaſon, but was quite unemployed, yet I received my weekly ſtipend of thirty ſhillings regularly.

Early in October I met Lord Robert Manners, who was croſſing James-ſtreet, Covent Garden, and whom I had forgot to mention as one of our party at Park-Gate and Holyhead on my journey the year before to Ireland. In Dublin he was very kind to me, and whenever we met, in the park or in the ſtreet, he always ſtopped or walked with me for eight or ten minutes chat.

When I ſolicited Lord Harcourt, ſome few years ago, to intercede with his Majeſty for a renewal of my York and Hull patents, I was highly favoured by my fellow traveller, Lord Robert Manners, for the permiſſion he gave me of his name to Lord Harcourt: He ſaw me twice in his ſitting-room below ſtairs in Groſvenor-ſquare; he declared he could chat, but he could not write; he was a picture of reverence and decay, for he had dignity to the laſt, but death ſeemed entirely to have full and faſt hold; he aſſured me he ſaw no viſitors, therefore this permiſſion was the more kind; he complained of excruciating agony, and in a very *ſhort time* after, that worthy, friendly, brave ſoldier, and nobleman departed this life.

On Lord Robert Manners ſtopping to ſpeak to me in James-ſtreet, after one of our uſual chats, he wiſhed my ſucceſs in London might equal that of Dublin, and we parted; but he had no ſooner left me than, as I was purſuing my walk, a ſtrong voice iſſued from a dining-room window with great vehemence, calling out——"Wilkinſon! Wilkinſon! Wilkinſon!"——I looked round, and ſoon ſpied my Maſter Foote, as he was termed.——His having treated me ſo very inhumanly during my illneſs in Ireland, and not having heard he was *then* engaged at Drury-Lane, had determined me, from the time he quitted

Dublin, never to trouble myſelf as to any future intimacy or acquaintance with him; but life's chapter of accidents is ſo various, and hangs by ſuch nice threads, that there is no directing, being directed, or adviſed for the beſt. It would certainly have appeared very rude not to have complied with ſo ſmiling and earneſt a ſummons, and after ten minutes converſation all my ſlights and wrongs were forgot and forgiven; and ſure if ever *one* perſon poſſeſſed the talents of pleaſing more than another, Mr. Foote was certainly the man. I can aver in all my obſervations that I never met with his equal. Mr. Garrick, whom I have dined and ſupped with, was far inferior to him in wit or repartee, as indeed were perſons of rank and degree; for Nature beſtows not *all her graces* on the great or the opulent. Mr. Foote was not confined to any particular topic; he was equal in all; religion, law, politics, manners of this or any age, and the ſtage of courſe. Indeed a poliſhed ſtranger would find it rare to meet with ſo many agreeable qualities for the conviviality of any company ſo combined as in a ſociety with Mr. Foote. This is not the tribute of flattery to his memory, but a piece of juſtice my own impartiality demands; for it would be deſpicable indeed to point out his foibles, and not be ready to atteſt his good qualities. As a wit he is too well

remembered, and far beyond my abilities to describe. As a blemish to his entertaining and improving qualities I must, as a relater of truth remark, that all these shining talents did not dazzle or answer the eager expectation, unless he himself was the sole object of every directed eye; for if a man of genius (I will suppose a Murphy or a Henderson) had slipt in a good story, or had given any entertaining information, and thereby gained the approbation and merit of the flowing souls, Foote not only immediately felt lessened, but could not easily recover his chagrin and jealousy; and the instant the guest had taken his leave and departed, he could not help expressing himself with great contempt, and asking the person or persons remaining if they had ever heard such d——d nonsence as that man had been uttering? and added expressions of wonder why the hounds at table should be entertained with such absurdity. But, indeed, to give the just picture, I must add, as a true historian—had the company left him in the best humour, those very spirits were only reserved for the exposure of each person's failure or particular manner, and which most people, more or less, have, as a certain appendage tagged to human nature: nor did that happen in a less but even in a stronger degree to himself; for his own peculiarities were more extravagant than any person's

whose gait, or gesture, or history he might choose to record or divert himself with; and if not given immediate credit for what he asserted against the absentee, he would vigorously fly to his happy reserve of never-failing fiction, which was veiled under such an appearance of truth, aided by wit, humour, and great vivacity, that he generally made converts, who, from irresistible impulse, obeyed his laughing mandates. It was policy to defer, as long as possible, quitting the room where he was monarch, as it was certain, the instant of any one's exit, without loss of time, to be served up, raw or roasted, to the next comer, and that without mercy, although the person had on the hour of his adieu conferred on Mr. Foote an obligation of the utmost necessary service: This idea cannot be better exemplified than by Mr. Murphy in his excellent and entertaining comedy of Know your own Mind. — The speech runs thus:

"Could not you stay till my back was fairly turn'd?"

My trait of Mr. Foote is true; and I think I may assert, when Mr. Murphy wrote that line, he wrote it as if Foote had at that instant been at his elbow.

Mr. Foote possessed, with all these foibles, mingled excellencies, generosity, and humanity; but vast

oſtentation was annexed to them. His table was open—he loved company at that table, and if they pronounced his wine had a ſuperior flavour, you could not have drank too much, or could he himſelf have been gratified till he had produced his claret of the beſt vintage.

Now Garrick was always on a fidget, eager for attention and adulation, and when he thought himſelf free and adored, would prattle ſuch ſtuff as would diſgrace a child of eight years old in converſation with its admiring and doting grandmamma. His heſitation and never giving a direct anſwer, aroſe from two cauſes—affectation, and a fear of being led into promiſes which he never meant to perform; and therefore "By—nay—why—now if you will not—why I cannot ſay but I may ſettle that matter, and as I ſhall ſee you on Tueſday, why then—Hey! you know that—But Mrs. Garrick is waiting—and you now—I ſay now—hey—now Tueſday You will remember Tueſday?"—As to money he ſeldom when walking the ſtreets had any, therefore could only lament his inability to give to a diſtreſſed ſupplicant; but if greatly touched—"Why Holland," or any other perſon that was with him, "Cannot you now advance half-a-crown, and be d—d to you?" which if Holland did, was a very good joke, and for fear of ſpoiling the jeſt, he never paid Holland

again. As to his vulgar vein of humour, which really deſerves no other epithet, when I was to perform the part of Bajazet, I ſhall in time and place take the liberty to relate one ſtrong proof, though I confeſs I think it too groſs to mention, and therefore it requires an apology, and if it falls into a fair lady's hand, I give a long warning, no leſs than twelve months, and requeſt ſhe will take Sir Clement Flint's advice in the Heireſs, and ſkip over the leaf. I would wiſh to avoid meanneſs, abuſe, or falſehood, and give an exact and candid trait of Mr. Garrick and Mr. Foote, with their ſhades; but by no means to obſcure their lights and good qualities, and hope I ſhall prove my words on the examination of the ſum total, and that my readers will ſay, my accounts are given in like a juſt ſteward, and with thoſe gentlemen and myſelf, the reckoning ſhall be fairly balanced.

I muſt beg pardon, for having left Mr. Foote ſo long a time waiting in his dining-room in James-ſtreet; he eagerly repeated his aſtoniſhment at not having ſeen or ever heard from me, he was quite anxious to know what I had been doing ſince he laſt ſaw me in Ireland, and what and when I was to appear at Drury-Lane? not having a doubt of my ſucceſs, let the character be what it would! He had the repeated pleaſure of

meeting with his friend Colonel Thornton, ſince his return from the late expedition againſt Cherbourgh, who told him, that he was acquainted with me at Portſmouth, and had been much entertained with my performances at that theatre. Mr. Foote inſiſted on my ſtaying dinner, which invitation I could not refuſe; after dinner, and while the glaſs was circulating, he intimated a wiſh I would make my firſt appearance at Drury-Lane, as his pupil, in a farce he had newly furbiſhed up, and titled the Diverſions of the Morning; and added, "You muſt Wilkinſon plainly ſee and be convinced that dirty hound Garrick, does not mean to do you any ſervice or wiſh you ſucceſs; but on the contrary he is a ſecret enemy, and if he can prevent your doing well be aſſured he will. I know his heart ſo well, that if you give me permiſſion to aſk for your firſt attempt on his ſtage, and to be in my piece, the hound will refuſe the moment I mention it; and though his little ſoul would rejoice to act Richard III. in the Dog Days, before the hoteſt kitchen fire for a ſop in the pan; yet I know his mean ſoul ſo perfectly, that if on his refuſal, I with a grave face tell him, I have his figure exactly made and dreſſed as a puppet in my cloſet, ready for public admiration; the fellow will not only conſent to your acting, but *what is more* extraordinary, his abject fears will

lend me money, if I ſhould ſay I want it." This I muſt own ſeems a ſevere picture, but the traits are from the life, and a true delineation of character; from which a perſon who had not been acquainted with Mr. Garrick, might be led to ſuppoſe he was a weak man, but it was far from being really the caſe; for his underſtanding and quickneſs of comprehenſion with fire and vivacity, were infinite; yet at repartee, Foote having the advantage, he ſunk in compariſon; but his real penetration far exceeded Mr. Foote's; and his great caution had brought on the "Hey—now—what," &c.

But reader, I ſhall be in a better humour with him by and bye, and he with me, where of courſe I ſhall think he appears to more advantage; however that baſk of ſunſhine did not laſt, but changed like April, and was inconſtant as the wind. Foote never was in awe of Garrick, but ever treated him with the moſt cutting ſatire, and well knew the way to profit from Garrick, was by always acting on his fears. Mr. Murphy uſed frequently to treat Garrick in the ſame manner, if he expected to obtain juſtice, when connected on matters of theatrical buſineſs; and indeed Mr. Murphy continued a teaſer to the Roſcius till the year of his death, whenever he met him in company. If I have uttered a falſehood, I beg Mr.

Murphy will correct me, whom I have not seen since February 1778, at which time he conferred an obligation, and related a whimsical story of their meeting in a mixed company, where Mrs. Garrick and Miss Moore, the authoress, were of the party. However strange it may appear, tho' Garrick made avarice his idol; yet fear was so predominant to preserve his fame, so all alive, that his own shadow, if he thought it obscured his greatness, would be sufficient to alarm and disturb his night's repose.

With very little thought I assented to Mr. Foote's proposal, which I just now mentioned, of playing in his farce; and verily believe if I had not, that I never should have had an opportunity of appearing on Drury-Lane stage, unless in some part totally unfit for me, when Mr. Garrick would have said and published he had really out of charity done all he could to serve me, but found it was impossible to make any thing to the purpose of such a blockhead; I should then have been discarded, and what would have been more fatal, Pope Garrick's denouncing damnation would of course have rendered all my struggling for fame in vain; for as Sancho says, "*Give a dog an ill name and hang him.*"

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.